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"A PEEP OVER THE BARLEYCORN."

IN THE FIRING LINE WITH THE P.W.O.,
. 2nd WEST YORKSHIRE REGIMENT, .
THROUGH THE RELIEF OF LADYSMITH.

SML
DT1916
063
1911

BY

"JACK THE SNIPER."

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'A PEEP OVER THE BARLEYCORN'

IN THE FIRING LINE WITH THE P.W.O.,

2nd West Yorkshire Regiment,

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DUBLIN:
PRINTED BY JOHN T. DROUGHT, 6 BACHELOR'S WALK.

1911.

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The Battalion strength as under :—

27 Officers.
1 Warrant Officer.
935 Non-commissioned Officers and Men.

The following Officers proceeded with the Battalion to South Africa :—

COLONEL F. W. KITCHENER, Commanding.
MAJOR H. DE C. HOBBS, 2nd in Command.
„ W. FRY.
„ C. J. M. HEIGHAM.
„ J. C. YALE.
CAPTAIN F. BERNEY.
„ W. S. CAREY.
„ J. S. BARTRUM.
„ A. C. DALY, Adjutant.
LIEUTENANT L. J. SPRY.
„ A. J. FRANCIS.
„ G. L. CROSSMAN.
„ O. H. S. NICHOLSON.
„ A. M. BOYAL.
2nd LIEUTENANT M. E. CANTOR.
„ C. C. BRICKNELL.
„ A. H. CUTHELL.
„ M. B. B. RYALL.
„ F. J. LEMON.
„ A. M. ROSS.
„ J. E. GRETTON.
„ C. A. COOKE.
„ E. A. PORCH.
„ C. J. H. LYSTER.

DT1916
063
1911

Sergeant-Major, subsequently promoted Quarter-Master, Richards. Attached :—

LIEUTENANT H. S. PENNELL, V.C.,
Derbyshire Regiment.

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KING PREMPEH'S STAFF.

THIS curious photograph represents a ceremonial staff which belonged to King Prempeh, and was brought to England by us after the Ashanti Expedition of 1896. As an emblem of office, it was carried before the king on all state occasions by a chief, who stuck it in the ground in front of the low Ashanti gold-studded stool, which did duty for a throne.

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PREFACE.

In the following pages I have endeavoured to bring back to the recollections of old comrades in arms in the West Yorkshire Regiment, and also to that of other regiments which were closely associated with ours at the time, some of the most stirring episodes—having a special local interest for us—of a period of warfare in which the West Yorkshires were constantly engaged. Despite the facts that the leading events of the great Boer War have been dealt with in detail by War Correspondents of eminence, and by military experts of world-wide experience, I am not without hope that the incidents narrated in the following chapters will awaken a responsive chord in the minds of old army associates, whether of my own or of other and closely allied regiments, on South African battle-fields, and that a perusal of them will not be without interest to the "Boys of the Old Brigade," as a memento of those stirring and eventful days of "Auld Lang Syne."

CHARLES JAMES O'MAHONY.

NOTE.—As a man whose joining and remaining in the Army was altogether due to an innate love of martial art, I take this opportunity of declaring that, after experiencing a wealth of worldly life, I never met men in civilian society to rival in general nobility of character those with whom I associated in the noble profession of arms. It will, I hope, be thoroughly understood that any lightly worded allusions to scriptural matters in this booklet were penned in a purely jocose—and the author hopes—inoffensive vein.

"Miss Canteen" and her heroes Captains "Booze," and "Bumper," whose portraits have been painted with perhaps a too flattering brush, for similar reasons refused to remain unsung and unlettered.

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LORD AND LADY COOMASSIE.

Captured by "Mick" Daly on the outskirts of King Prempeh's Stockade.

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"A PEEP OVER THE BARLEYCORN."

AFTER the regiment was made up to war strength by absorbing the men of the reserve and handing the "Dolly Grays" over to the School Board, we sailed from Southampton on the 20th October, 1899, in the S.S. "Roslin Castle," as one of the four regiments composing the 2nd Brigade, 1st Division, part of the 1st Army Corps of 47,000 men.

This 2nd or English Brigade, under the command of General Hilyard, C.B., consisted of

2nd Queen's,
,, Devonshire,
,, West Yorkshire, and
,, East Surrey's.

Nothing remarkable occurred on the voyage to Capetown, save a fishy or mermaidish rumour, that the Boer or Dutch Government had a gunboat prowling round. Consequently we ran with lights out for several nights after leaving Las Palmas. Very inconvenient certainly, if you happened to be on deck late, and, in trying to locate your hammock down below, poked your nose into some other fellow's. Then language breezier than the sea came forth, language never uttered by one of Ouida's guardsmen. However, everything, including the troopship, went on all right, proving that someone in authority was suffering from nautical delusions.

A "Buggabboo" Sailor's Discovery.

On completing the trip we discovered to our utmost chagrin that the said gunboat scare was purely mythical—the Celtic machinations of Watty Farrell's

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brain, a Dublin turf-boat mariner, who had surreptitiously joined the "Roslin Castle" as an ABLE SEAMAN. What Watty espied through the mystic veil of night approaching Las Palmas, and took to be a Dutch Admiral perched on the conning tower of a submarine boat, was nothing more warlike than a bewhiskered Sea Serpent. It was his first time on "blue water," although thirty years "captain," and sole survivor of the "Buggabboo," famed as the turf-boat which fuelled the camp-fires of Brian Boru's army. Everyone versed in Ireland's nautical record knows, that this historical Dreadnought foundered with a cargo of turf and pedigree fleas when "sailing" through a Bog of Allen whirlpool.

Lectures on the "Runaway" Characteristics of the Boers.

Coinciding exactly with the feelings aroused by this turf-boat sailor's discovery were the sensations permeating our minds when inhaling the heart-depressing atmosphere of the quarter-deck. Here the "scooting" characteristics of the Boers, were, by lecture and diagram, daily illustrated. On learning of Watty Farrell's discovery, we soldiers trembled at the thoughts of being sailor-like "ignominiously" buried at sea. On hearkening to lectures describing the runaway customs of the Boers, we shivered lest we might be denied the glory of occupying warriors' graves in South Africa. We were actually between the devil and the deep sea during the voyage, permanently wedged in between Watty Farrell's gunboat scare and the soul-sinking lectures on the "runaway" Boers The thought of being blown up at sea was dismal enough, but far less disagreeable than the possibility of having nothing to blow down in South Africa. The loud thumping of the engines alone drove these depressing thoughts away, for their resounding and deck-vibrating thud rang to us like the great big heart of war, clamouring for the glories of

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South African battlefields. Yes, indeed, we had a doubtful time of it listening to these lectures illustrating our whirlwind and bloodless advance from Cape Colony. The thoughts of having to catch up with runaway Piets and Paul's sent our tub-stomached and corn-toed Tommies into hysterics.

Fleas like Blackbirds.

When our Sandhurst expert in theoretical tomfoolery, drew a blackboard picture depicting the precipitous flight of Boers out Ladysmith's front door, as men in khaki knocked peremptorily at its rear entrance, the sighing and sobbing of each soldier's heart awoke his abdominal echoes. As already stated, Watty Farrell's gunboat discovery was purely mythical, far less harmless than the "Buggabboo's" consignment of brown turf and black fleas, in which the canal navigator traded. Indeed, the latter being of the famous NORTH CORK pedigree breed, all as big as blackbirds, comprised a very restless and prickly cargo. Luckily for us, however, Watty brought none of his man-eaters aboard. On account of the gigantic "SKIN PINCHERS" sporting plume-shaped hornets they were locally known as the "NORTH CORK RIFLES." Any farmer lucky enough to possess a "NORTH CORK RIFLE" dispensed with dog license expenditure. A JACK FLEA of this famous breed paid a "double debt" keeping the burglar idle out in the cold with bark of tongue, and the soil-tiller busy 'neath the blankets with prod of hornet,

The "quarter-deck" orations on the shyness and horn-withdrawing characteristics of the Boers, too, proved highly vaporous, for the military lectures of to-day depict the Dutchmen as being anything but runaways. Yes, indeed, effervescent to a drivelling degree, for the scalding contents of the Brummagem bucket Kruger's last kick upset, blistered British humanity and left a nasty mark behind. We were indeed exasperatingly uneasy about everything, fearful of theBoers receding, snail-like, into their shells, fearful

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of being blown up by the Dutch gunboat, "Oom Paul," *i.e.*, Watty Farrell's Sea Serpent. In all probability we should have been much more impatient had we known that for well nigh three years the lone veldt of Africa would form the fighting and burial ground of the 2nd West Yorkshires.

Capts. "Booze" and "Bumper" to the Rescue.

But, as already mentioned, the engine's throb came to us like the great big heart of war. Then, as we listened to its resounding pulsations from the frothy bosom of a full-blast canteen, Watty Farrell's Dutch gunboat and all other troubles vanished, when draughts from creamy ale pots and puffs of dreamy pipe-smoke had "moulded" every soldier into a world-beating John Bull. Yielding to the battle-painting proclivities of beer-stimulated minds we turned the pipe-smoke into clouds of war. Through them Major "Barleycorn" ably supported by Captains "Bumper" and "Booze" led us victoriously.

Cutting war capers, however, on a troopship's "barleycorn floor" differs glaringly from peeping behind a rifle's "Barleycorn" beside which Boer kopjes loomed, Long Toms boomed, and Mausers barked incessantly. True to the traditions dearest to a soldier's heart, the canteen of the "Roslin Castle" formed the one and only rallying-ground. In it we feared no foe for its "water bottles" held the juice of Tommy's heart, and its fleecy pipe-smoke the war-clouds through which he would follow Captains "Booze" and "Bumper" anywhere. Yet, when the ship's beer-shop closed, and our throat-lubricating "ammunition" fell short, rearguard actions hammockwards took place in the dark—lights were out—gloom reigned supreme once more, for the "Roslin Castle" still dreaded Watty Farrell's Sea Serpent. You see we were bound for South Africa with brainless craniums and non-trophied breasts to return choke-full of common sense, and like the medal-starred windows of modern pawn shops loaded with decorations.

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Watty Farrell dismissed the Ship.

At last Capetown appeared in view. Once within its waters our spirits soared sky high, for Watty Farrell was paid off; his certificate of seamanship (discovered in his bunk) proving him to be a bog-man, who had worn out his teeth, tootling a tin horn abaft the peat-stack of a mule-drawn canal boat. Watty hailed from Bandon, where the pigs are Protestants, the donkeys Catholics, the mules Presbyterians, and the cats court in Irish. As a double-dyed liar his tongue held supreme sway. When it started wagging, blue-bottle flies ceased skating on bald pates and window-panes to listen to his tales. However, his thirty years captaincy of the prickly cargoed "Buggabboo" failed to render him immune to hysterics—failed deplorably. Yes, indeed, for on espying the Sea Serpent nearing Las Palmas his roar, "Lights out, Dutch gunboat on the starboard bow," almost knocked the captain off his feet. And the lights went out, notwithstanding, that Kruger's last warship, the Oom Paul, had foundered in Majuba Bay with a squadron of Cronje's "Horse Marines," thirty years previously. If however, the lamps went down Watty failed to quench the fire of Tommy's flame-tailed oaths, for we went bunkwards blazing.

Kruger's Minstrels.

Although the trip to Durban still lay ahead, all fear and apprehension of being, sailor-like, "ignominiously" buried at sea vanished with the abrupt dismissal of Watty. In the distance we saw the African hills, and oh, how we yearned to set our feet on shore and our eyes on Kruger's whiskers. We got on shore all right, but never, oh never a look at the old Boer's face, or a lock of his hirsute appendage. No, but dear reader, we heard his Mauser angels sing, and no Moody or Sankey ever possessed such soul-fumigating tongues. Although not permitted to bow or bend on the

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field of strife, we couldn't keep our knees from rocking as the missionaries Ping Pong, Pom Pom, and Long Tom chanted that old angelic refrain :—

Won't you come to Heaven Tommy?
Come to meet your angel Annie?
By the Golden Gates she's waiting
For her gallant soldier man.
A saint she's bound to make you,
If by magic she can rake you,
From where the devil holds you,
In the "Canteen" with a "Can."

But hush, suspense is banished,
From the "Canteen" you have vanished,
By the Modder, not the Dodder
You are "scoving" Tommy now.
Flight to me you'll soon be taking,
Wings for you the Boers are making,
Round about you hills are quaking,
Quaking to Long Tom's "Bow Wow."

Soul-saving Tommy.

Yes, indeed, we often heard Kruger's angels chirping. On special light (lead) spreading crusades, when we, sanctimonious Tommies, "sported" six Bibles to the Dolly Gray song book of the undevotional Boers, the soul "sawdering" art of Lee-Metford and Mauser rent the aerial canopy asunder. Then with evangelical eyes we espied the bullet-perforated spirits of Botha's, De Wet's, and Joubert's "saved snipers" soaring gaily aloft. After witnessing this edifying spectacle we sang across the veldt, "Onward, Christian Soldiers." Little wonder, then, that the nightingale choirs of Paradise should have aquiline nosed Kruger and Kitchener as "Patron Saints." Needless to say, the ethereal combinations alluded to are formed of helmet "decked" Britons lured heavenwards from the thanksgiving picnic on Spion Kop, bewhiskered Boers, coaxed skywards from the sunken shrine of Paaderberg, and turban-crowned Dervishes "angel wing-fitted" in the famous pilgrimage to Omdurman.

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An Apology.

Being still under the spell of South African anthems, and fretting lest the voice of the Last Trumpet might "duplicate" Long Tom's crack of doom, is my penitential excuse for dilating so extensively on Mauser and Lee-Metford melody without this story having yet brought the "Roslin Castle" within hail of South African land. I assure you I had a firm belief in hell, heaven, and purgatory, whilst both War Missionaries were convincing me that the conflict, created by gold-seeking rogues, was being carried through by death-seeking fools.

Apologies, however, are not needed for my "Broad Acre" treatment of the jocular side of the trip out. No, being still safely ensconced in the boozy bosom of the "Roslin Castle," I am inhaling atmosphere helpful to a faithful portrayal of the "Swank And Swagger Side."

Tommy's Holy Oil.

To infuse a proper spirit into and ensure a trite chronicling of history which proved momentous to the British people, stimulation is essential to a profound degree. Hence my desire to linger in the bubble-blowing bosom of the "Roslin Castle's" quarter-deck. The sombre-garbed solemn-faced Padre dispenses soul-lubrication to pilgrims bound for the "LAND BEYOND JORDAN." Then why not sunny-featured red-tunicked Tommy administer copious draughts of the "Roslin's Castle's" canteen compound to warriors peeping through the pages of this booklet, "Over the Barleycorn of the West Yorks."

"You'll get there soon enough Tommy," shouted the engine driver to me at Howick. Having realised the bullet-nosed accuracy of his prophetic remark, I like to parley a good deal in the cosy breast of the "Roslin Castle." Here West Yorkshire soldiers are

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playing comic opera—the breezy prelude to the solemn war game about being staged upon Kruger's barren land.

It would ill become Paddy Day's, Mick Daly's and Taffy Jones's canteen, barrack-square and battlefield companion. to turn lightly away from sorties led by Captains "Booze" and "Bumper," in order to wear plumes of mourning in the opening pages of this little book. Warriors' graves will soon enough be yawning, and enforced sadness and sobriety sprung upon Yorkshire hearts.

Fires of death are already kindled on the arid hill-tops of the land we're bound for. Then, like the soldier, whose passport to eternity bore the command, "Right through no stop at purgatory," we too, see the future blazing before us—Kruger's Hob of Hades.

Good-bye Miss "Canteen."

Although the old hands of the West Yorks never yet saw sadness or sobriety still the heart of a "Red-Coat," they have seen many a comrade fly suddenly to Jordan through lack of a draught from the bosom of that creamy hooded ministering angel, *i.e.*, a frothy pint. But alas! the little barmaid is debarred from the field of strife being compelled to return on board the "Roslin Castle" to "help out" more Tommies. Consequently it is only natural that we should now, as the voyage is closing, rally round the central figure from whose soothing bosom sprang the lip-salve and heart-salve of the trip. We would have had no clouds of war through which to follow Captains "Booze" and "Bumper" without her. Sad it is to know that leaving her behind on board the "Roslin Castle," means the leaving behind in South Africa of sweethearts who often kissed her soldier-loved lips.

Sadness and sobriety never wore down a soldier while Miss Canteen was at hand. No one ever saw Tommy Atkins sober and sorry for it, whilst she had a

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bob in her pocket or a gill in her keg. We will miss her on the veldt of Africa, the old dark gowned angel, who so often held her lovers erect beside shining bayonets when teetotal enemies fell exhausted on the bungalow-flanked parades of India, Burma, Africa, Arabia, and across the old depot square at York. Voicing the feelings of countless admirers, I now bid her the farewell of hearts beating 'neath khaki war garb—hearts destined never again to go out to her in merry England 'neath the blaze of the old scarlet coat. Good-bye Miss Canteen of the "Roslin Castle," and when you go back to Wellington's island tell your dispensing companion in the West Yorks depot, that the men bred to stick the longest, and die the gamest on the veldt of Africa are the boys who worshipped at her wine-welled breast.

Durban at Last.

At last the breezes of the ocean, the blister-raising jokes of Watty Farrell's "North Cork Rifles," with his Dutch gunboat and Dublin canal turf-boat, the famous "Buggabboo," have vanished. We are now on the 12th November in the waters of Durban harbour deeply shadowed by the land of war. I should have mentioned that when at Capetown (where General Buller arrived two days previously) we were transferred to a new division in the Natal Field Force, our place in the old being taken by the Highlanders of Magersfontein fame. Slower and slower throb the big ship's engines as she glides noiselessly through the tropical waters of Durban harbour. Prouder, and prouder the Union Jack of England flies at the mast-head. as from out the crowded shoreline hoarse exulting calls for Tommy, float across the clear South African air. We reply from beside bulwark and hand-rail. Then, as the last wharf-side salvo dies away the breezy Troopship's prelude to the West Yorkshires campaign in South

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Africa is ended—we are at last within earshot of Long Tom's "Hallelujah."

Tommy, the People's Hope and Man of the Hour.

But the engines still are throbbing, and at the BIG SHIP'S stern the waters, ever and anon, are churned into foaming breakers as she manœuvres to reach her mooring station by the quay. At last she is snugly berthed, then out shoot the "gangways," and over them file the West Yorkshires destined to play a true and gallant part in the South African war. With uncontrollable eagerness we are extended the hand of welcome. Long suppressed feelings are exultingly ventilated; the features of each individual resembling a youngster's snatched from the clutches of a brow-beating bully through the arrival of the former's pugilistic brother on the scene.

Scudding "Up Country."

At once we entrain for "up country." Then as the gasps of the snorting engine replace the booming piston-rod evolution of the good ship "Roslin Castle," we are off 'midst a din of farewell salvos. In a moment, however, silence reigns supreme, for we are travelling through a land o'er which broods the calm of an impending conflagration. Everyone wears an air of mute, and wondering expectancy, as the old 14th regiment approaches the kopjes and plateaux, from out whose lion-deserted caverns bewhiskered fighters are peeping.

Now, and then, a wave of martial ardour animates the soldiers as the troop-train scales the summit of view-commanding gradients, and glimpses of Boer gun holding kopjes meet the inquisitive eye. Every movement of animal life on hilltop and valley, every shadow cast by low-soaring vulture, every sound emitted by donga and gorge is noted and commented

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on. Yes, measured by eye and ear for we are amidst the iron hills of Natal beyond which, the martial womb of South Africa is about to bring forth the Red Dragon of war.

The country is shimmering in tropical sunshine, and flanking the railway-lines—scintillating like the silvered rims of an endless ribbon—kopjes loom gaunt, and mummy-like in sun-parched skin. Yet despite the landscape's mirror-like features the haunting gloom of impending carnage pervades the crystal scene. Everyone indulges in muffled conversation, for the 2nd West Yorkshires are nearing the burial ground of martial reputations—nearing the war-pitch on which beardless Briton will face grizzly Boer in a mighty effort to wipe the stains of Laing's Nek, and Ingogo off England's battlefield slate. To the mental vision of war-haunted Tommies, the Verkerleur of Africa, and Union Jack of England, seem ever and anon appearing, and disappearing through clouds of byegone strife.

To them also awakened echoes are paying back the battling tongues of Boer and Briton—the voices of the men whose bones long lay bleaching 'midst the hoofed, and horned remnants of the lion's prey. In the daytime, scared by the locomotives screaming throttle, birds of carrion flee from the bone-showing hearts of battlefield catacombs. In the night-time, when the nocturnal voice of the engine breaks the silence of the sleeping hills, beasts of carrion crouch in the moon-cast shadows of the coffinless mounds. Yes, indeed, we are travelling to combat in a land of savage features, and savage history—a mystical region, whose crystal air is vitalising, whose sun is blood purifying, whose very breath is invigorating. Yet it presents a face of haggard sadness, for its robeless kopjes and homeless valleys wear the tawny hue and stony silence of the Lion's domain.

Ghostly Echoes.

To the laager-marked kloofs and dongas athwart the railway line the troop-train wheels keep up a defiant

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clacking. Then answering back from out the history preserving hearts of trackside echoes, Boer tongues of bloody lay and legend breathe—"We're ready, we're ready, come on, come on."

With constant watchfulness our eyes are faced towards that savage borderland, beyond which bold Majuba flaunts its bone-bearing head on high. All ears are set to catch tell-tale sounds rolling from where myriads of crossless mounds define the battle-fields of old. All ears are pricked to catch the faintest echo awakened beyond the outpost hills of Natal—away, where Kruger's lion-hunters are hosting for the fray. But hark! for that ear-splitting shriek of the engine resounding along lonely spruit and donga, heralds our approach to Gillets railway station. Simultaneously, with the locomotive's warning signal all eyes glance window-wards to catch a glimpse of the veldtside stopping place. A fluttering speck of colour appears, and disappears in the distance as we swing in and out round spruit and kopje, adding a mystical feature to the wild and weird aspect of our route. Acting like a red rag flashed in the face of a vicious bull, it kindles the martial fire of every soldier, bringing each troop-train war-dog instantly to his feet. A lengthy fringe of human beings now o'er-hangs the carriage windows—Tommies leaning eagerly forward to catch a glimpse of that elfin ensign appearing, and disappearing above the railway track.

Loyal Mrs. Watts.

At last the final bend in the line is reached. Then the "welkin" rings to the cheers of Tommy as Mrs. Watts, wife of the station-master, is seen in the centre of the platform holding "the apparition"—England's banner aloft. She is flanked on all sides by the refreshing faces of aroma-bearing tea cans, and with a grace and kindness begotten of a queenly heart, dispenses the cup that cheers to every "Son of a Gun."

A short, sharp whistle, followed by a sheet of hissing steam from the breast-pipes of the engine, then puff! puff! ! puff ! ! ! and we glide noiselessly

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away to receive our first war check at Maritzburg. Here we were notified that the Boers had nicked the line below Willow Grange. Consequently, deeming further night travelling outside martial reckoning, our nocturnal "dozings" were partaken of at Fort Napier.

An Asthmatic Locomotive.

Next morning we resumed our journey to Howick. As the country rises 2,000 feet in every few miles, our engine was replaced by a hill-climbing, cloven-footed piece of mechanism. Although the flame-shooting, spark-spitting, grunting and groaning of the latter represented a full-blast volcano, the speed attained up the steep gradients, between Maritzburg and Howick, fell far short of a dromedary's gait. When snake-like encircling the rims of basin shaped chasms as we wound in and out round the bulging bosoms of the soaring hills, the troop-train almost completed a circle. During this telescopic evolution, the nose of the engine emulated the muzzle of a canine seeking for "North Cork Rifles," in the flea accommodating portion of its tail-end. As this manœuvre, enabled those in front and rear carriages to indulge in martial buffoonery, the howling set up by the war-dogs of the 14th approaching each chasm exceeded anything of its kind ever associated with the whiskey-sprinkling moments of a Seven Dials wedding, or a Donnybrook wake. At the opportune moment when the engine poked its nose between the buffers of the last equipage, the men in the firing-line—the men at the front, *i.e.*, those occupying the truck abaft the bunkers of the wheezing locomotive, expounded on the battles they had won, and the regions they had conquered. Rising high above the chorus of congratulations emanating from the last carriage, a jealous Tommy's tongue invariably cried "Aye ! and what about the dead men's pockets ye pilfered."

Winding like an Irish Funeral through the Arid hills.

During our "Dead March In Saul" mode of pro-

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gression, the absence of the Irish "Wisharoo, Wisharoo," from the soldiers bemoaning ejaculations alone, convinced me that I was not participating in a West Cork man's funeral. Indeed, when the echoes awoke to the grunting and groaning of the asthmatic engine, I felt as if trailing behind a corpse perched on a car bespattered with the varnish of a Carbery hen-roost, and drawn by Paddy Hurley's bob-tailed nag. Instinctively too, I groped 'neath the seat for St. Patrick's "Potheen-Crock," a draught from which ensures a copious flow of eye-water during the final grave-side ceremony—the droning of "The Last Long Keen." Having failed to find the "Mountain-Dew" historically associated with the burial of a man whose soul soars heavenwards in Caubeen and knee-breeches, I at once realised that instead of assisting at the interment of a monkey-faced Irishman, I was about consigning to the grave a good many pig-headed John Bulls.

The devil a Boer ever opened a Bible more cautiously, slowly, or solemnly than that antiquated engine felt its gasping way up the zig-zag railway climb between Maritzburg aud Howick. Had Dan Bond voiced the feelings of his suffering compatriots by reciting "The Litany for the Mournful," instead of frequently ejaculating "Never say die till you're properly dead," the "Lord-have-mercy-on-us," sighings and sobbings of the asthmatic engine would have absolved the whole khaki clad contents of the troop-train from sin. I have frequently seen Shauneen Hourihane's sacred mule, Kit Keeler, conveying in a hoary leathern pouch old maids Bibles to kirk on a Sunday. But in speed and spirit, the hybrid ranked a Derby winner compared with the wheezing bit of mechanism to which our troop-train was hitched. When decked in her pilgrimage paraphernalia, with Bible-loaded wallet on top, Bill Berry, the verger in front, and fifty-two coffin-faced old maids reflected in the parchment-skinned features of her hairless rump, Kit Keeler presented a picture to the antediluvian solemnity of which every head bowed. Yes, indeed,

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the long fizzed maids, hoary wallet, and patriarchal mule reminded me graphically of that Egyptian region which versatile "Tim Haley" designates the Land of Loaves and Fishes, when sarcastically defining "How Moses Struck the Rock."

An Engine Driver's Prophecy.

Rendered furious by our funereal progress, I challenged the driver on arriving at the railway station about the matter, advising him to at once apply a blister-rising plaster of "North Cork Rifles" to the spavined old smoke-puffer under his charge. He was completely taken by surprise, and having contemptuously retreated a few yards, turned round and approached me in long measured strides. Suddenly, he stopped dead short, and with one eye closed, studiously looked me up and down. He uttered not one word but beckoned me nigh. Then placing his lips to my ear whispered into it, "CHUM, YOU'LL BE THERE TIME ENOUGH, Don't You Fret."

Two years later this reply kept constantly ringing in my ears during the dreams of night as I lay on the bedless veldt, foot-sore, worn out, and glaringly emaciated. Yes, indeed, its echoing memory made me often think what a pity that said engine-driver's time was spent on the footplate of a locomotive. To the staff of old Moore's Almanac, Halley's Comet would appear a mere twinkling luminary alongside his Prophetic Star.

In the afternoon, just as Dan Bond had become hoarse-voiced with hope-inspiring ejaculations, we steamed into Estcourt, the first regiment of the first Army Corps to arrive at the seat of war. Lying in Camp on our arrival were the Dublin Fusiliers—stationed in the country—who had retired from Dundee to Fort Wylie and thence to Estcourt—the Border regiment also stationed in the country, and two guns—Naval Volunteer Artillery—which, with small detachments of the "Imperial Light Horse,"

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"Natal Carbineers," and Natal Police were never out of it.

Billiards in a deserted Estcourt Hostelry.

Next day, having stretched and pruned Tommy's long couped-up wings of pleasure, we soared to where the last echo of social felicitation awoke to peals of English laughter, and the kissing and caressing of two table-coursing billiard balls. As we entered the English owned hostelry from which the convivial sounds and ivory sphere-clicks emanated, not a vestige of furniture, not a fair maid's snow white streamer, beloved of Tommy, was to be seen. All looked hollow and tomb-like till, on hearing our footfalls in the furniture-denuded entrance, the beaming features of the insuppressible proprietor appeared in view.

On realising our identity he bolted suddenly backwards, the empty corridors resounding with his joyous acclamations as he shouted to those in the still table adorned billiard room, "Lads, lads, some bonnie boys from England are outside." On returning with "all that was left" of Estcourt's cue-wielders he and they cried, "Welcome, welcome, the stock is disbanded, the family is disbanded, the house is dismantled, but the old English billiard table is still buzzing in the ring." Just fancy a tiny group of Englishmen were making their final club-land rally in the inner heart of that bare-walled hostelry—preserving intact, to the very last flicker of social and sporting life, the green-baized table around whose bosom the joys and glories of Merry England were habitually recalled.

St. Patrick's Shamrock v. St. George's Rose.

On reaching the billiard-room, Private Mick Daly announced with a pleasure predicting chuckle that Paddy "Fanton," champion weight thrower of the West Yorks, would give an exhibition with the cue. Mick had very special reasons for this, as "Fanton," though an extremely powerful man, could scarcely push a billiard ball. In supreme sphere-propelling

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manœuvres he grunted loudly as he followed the ivory bodily across the sea of baize, and still kept grunting as he returned on all-fours under the table. Private "Nobby" Clarke, champion needle-threader and button-sewer of D. Company, was, after much cajoling and persuasive back-patting, enticed to take up the cue against Irish Paddy on behalf of God, old England, and St. George. Clarke's one idea of billiards took the shape of hard-hitting, to watch which was worth a course of food-digesting, microbe-purging calisthenics. Indeed, the skipping, stepping, and general dodging indulged in by the audience to avoid the flying spheres were deemed by Mr. Sandow a magical preventive of the "Royal Disase." In fact, this great athlete with a view to exploiting "Nobby" as a wand-wielding "Medicine Man," tried repeatedly to get him out of the army. Sandow realised that when his billiard-room audience—simple life-cure clients—had in ball-dodging evolution leaped high enough, Clarke would send the sphere slick into the microbe-holding pocket of each "crony's" appendicitis and rid them for ever of the "Royal Disase." The handicap was 250 up. Paddy on the 200 mark, having only 50 to make, managed to win first prize. Clarke on the 180 mark, having 70 to make, secured the second trophy. In distributing the laurels the proprietor, a noted humourist and champion golfist, said:—"I have seen billiards won by good play, good luck, and good fluking; how did you win, Private Paddy?" "Avourneen," said Paddy, "Avourneen, I won with the aid of the four-lafed shamrock and the blessin'-o'-God." In presenting Clarke with second prize, the proprietor said:—"Private Clarke, I have never seen anyone to approach you as a hard hitter. If the strength used by you playing billiards, that is, the strength which sends one ball up the chimney, another out the window, and another into a spittoon, were harnessed the same as they are going to harness

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the water power of Niagara, it would be capable of sending a golf ball spinning round the globe."

Estcourt Camp.

After this joy-giving exploit we "found" our true "land legs" as well as pleasure "pinions," and between their delusive meanderings forgot momentarily that Kruger's land of coffinless graveyards was nigh. The same soul-sinking overhead silence experienced during our troop-train journey prevails in our head-quarters, and a strange subterranean rumbling as if vast legions were passing over adjacent war-plains, ever and anon strikes the ear. But we reck little now of sound or silence for we are busy in this camp of Estcourt—busy midst the long lines of bell-shaped tents strewn with burnished bridle-bits, buckled accoutrements, and razor-edged sabres.

Dominating all, shrouded in their canvas great-coats, the sleeping cannon cast snout-like shadows across the Battery's long green lanes. From a distance a vast portion of our battlefield head-quarters seems fringed in oscillating tapestry, for, ever-restless, ever-swaying rows of hobbled horses frame the cavalry lines.

In midday "camp stars" twinkle at every corner as the bayonets of the sentinel war-hawks flash in beat retracing evolution to the rays of the tropical sun. At night time one hears continuously the low, measured pacing of the near-at-hand sentries, whilst ever and anon a horse "call" breaks upon the voiceless atmosphere. Then in answer to the lonely trooper's whinny a chorus of neighs rolls out across the inky night.

A Battle Faced Sun.

But morning soon arrives. To its blood-red sun of war, good fellowship reigns supreme between Officers and Privates. One look at the blazing orb makes us all akin, for its crimson face recalls the fields of blood, o'er which the men of the old 14th staggered on to

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victory. Yes, the unbending of the Officers defines that "Red Tape" has been left behind in England and pipe-clay washed off on the voyage out. In a moment the latter exhilarating feature is most pleasingly illustrated as the Commanding Officer, Colonel Kitchener, brother of Lord Kitchener, goes by. He is in quest of two "wayward" soldiers and, in tracing their whereabouts, cries to a group of Privates—

"Have any of you men seen Captain Daly, the Adjutant?"

Chorus of group: "No, sir."

Colonel Kitchener: "Have any of you seen Mick Daly, my servant?"

Chorus of group: "No, sir."

Colonel Kitchener: "I have Daly, an Adjutant. I have Daly, a servant, both are absent warriors. May the devil—damn the Daly's!"

A War Correspondent at Work.

Now let us away to that field of modern war whose echoes were awakened by the valorous voice of "Fighting" Winston Churchill. Although we did not actually smell of its sulphurous atmosphere we were almost within earshot of that blood-spilling incident which, despite sounding an armoured train's death-knell, proved that England still had men impregnated with the spirit of the Raglans and Cardigans. Mr Churchill as war correspondent, accompanied the 90 Dublin Fusiliers, 80 Durban Light Infantry and 10 Blue Jackets, who with a Naval 7 pounder reconnoitred in the armoured train Colenso-way on the 15th November, '99, under the Command of Captain Haldane.

All went well until nearing Frere on the return journey when Boer-placed barriers brought the engine to a stand-still. Then from the dominating face of an adjacent kopje heavy cannon gutted the trucks

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making pulp of the men, and scrap iron of the armour. In the midst of the disemboweled wreck the figure of Mr. Winston Churchill, formed the human pivot around whose valorous heart the little band of English and Irish soldiers rallied.

Ah! yes, Mr. Churchill was amidst the Ashe Street boys of Dublin, when, to the impact of countless shells, the sledges of a minor shipyard seemed to be ringing in the heart of the armoured train. But he quailed not, and when he had sent the released portion of the train with the last wounded Private away, he again faced the shot-showering hills till a dozen Mausers levelled at his breast demanded honourable capitulation.

Glorious young blood, now say we—Glorious. A soldier may be stimulated by the ground-rumbling velocity of a cavalry charge to dare anything. Cooped up, however, in the "pulped" heart of a dismantled armoured train meant listening to music "Old Nick's" stokers alone could withstand. Recollect that Mr. Churchill was not out on the legion-bearing field of war in sabre-flashing freedom.

No, he was in a death trap well likened to that pit of slaughter in which the rope-bound bullock falls to the butcher's axe. "Glorious—again"! say we, "young blood." "You are an Englishman, aye! a straight one, a non-brow beater, a man who would unsheath his sword to allow his command meet the enemy, man for man. Then if beaten in fair play strife would gladly shake hands with the victor. Yes, you are a non-egotistical soldier who basks not in the sunshine of England's ancient might, for you are aware that the basis of her future military career must differ from the circus-like parading of golden epaulets."

Kruger presents "Hairy Mary" with a Hobble Skirt.

The armoured train consisted of open trucks with

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bullet-proof sides, loop holed for rifle fire. The engine was enveloped by the Naval men with layers of rope to a thickness of several feet, rendering it impervious to shell-fire. The locomotive was completely hidden from view, and as the ends of the cordage trailed on the ground, its every movement duplicated the graceful evolutions of a Mermaid.

It was decidedly refreshing to watch the engine go by—shouts of "There goes Hairy Mary" ringing from the sailors as she sailed away—beneath a fringe of darksome smoke, and above a fringe of golden cordage. "D" Company was to have furnished the escort to "Hairy Mary" next day but we found her immovable—stuck, stock still—in pose and clothes a veritable Maud Allan. Displeased at the "dowdy" appearance of her visiting rig, the fashionable Boers had decked her in a Creusot-Shot hobble-skirt, a Pom Pom fringed bloomers, and a Mauser-trimmed Merry Widow hat. As you are aware, human, and armoured train garments of the hobble kind were invented by old Kruger. Mr. Churchill witnessed the fitting on of "Hairy Mary's." He says the Boer tailors are the cleverest thimble-riggers imaginable.

The Engine Driver's Tribute to "Fighting" Winston.

On the culmination of the campaign I chatted with the engine driver at Maritzburg and tried to elicit from him the general incidents of the affair. After all that lapse of time he was still so astonished at the coolness of Mr. Churchill that discoursing on anything else was quite unpalatable. Drawing himself up imperiously and looking me straight in the face he, with emphatic gesture, said:—"I never thought living man could be so cool, so brave, as Winston Churchill. Be heavens me lad," banging his hand on the table, "you'd think he was marshalling ladies for the

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Queen's drawingroom instead of being in a corner very little colder than the lowest hob of hell."

Galling Outpost Work—Soldiers loaded like Bed-Carrying Beggars.

During these, the opening stages of the campaign, duty was very heavy; half Battalions mounting outpost on alternate nights and occasionally whole regiments—signifying of course bedless times for Tommy. In the opening rounds of the long-drawn-out conflict, sleep in any case came not within the scope of martial reckoning. No, for the mere oscillation of bramble or bush meant the wag of a Boer's whisker.

Oh! the feelings experienced by chicken-hearted yeomen "doing" lonely outpost duty amidst the "sniper" haunted hills, must have been radiantly exhilarating. What, with rifle erect in hand, hair erect on head, and everything crawling around them, the buttons of their tunics must have stood edgewise to the impact of palpitating hearts.

Our fighting order, besides the indispensable rifle and 150 rounds of ammunition, included haversack, canteen, water-bottle, and unnecessary rolled coat attached to the belt in rear, crowned by folded blankets suspended between the shoulders. This envelopment of the body developed a jail-bird's slumber, during the twisting and turning evolutions of which Tommy muttered, Hell's Damnation, to the inventor of "Red Tape." With every movement the sleeping soldiers groaned menacingly, for the pouches of ammunition hanging loosely on either side, worked like the rib-roasting wheels of a paddle-boat.

General Buller to the Rescue.

It soon became apparent that troops weighed down with all this unnecessary paraphernalia, must in-

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evitably fail to cope with a mobile enemy on horseback. Common-sense came to the rescue when General Buller dispensed with the wearing of the blanket and great-coat, and ordered a light waterproof sheet, rolled and attached to the belt, to be carried instead. The alacrity of the soldier in light "order" contrasted with the same individual labouring along like a pack-mule defined clearly what was always known to the man in the ranks, that however you accustom the soldier to pack-drill, an army in light trim will make rings round a foe heavily accoutred.

For some time our small party was at the mercy of the Boers, who could have easily brushed us aside and occupied any position to Durban, but "motive"—the essence of slim Piet's strategy—glued them to the country round Colenso. Here they occupied the world's best natural fighting ground. Reinforcements came pouring in day and night. On the 16th of November the 2nd Queen's, 2nd East Surrey's marched into camp, and by the arrival of the Devon's on the 30th, our English Brigade was complete, and the little nucleus dwarf had grown into a veritable "Slim the Boer Killer."

Bound for Brynbella (Willow Grange).

But the Boer engines of war, destined to stay the martial career of Yorkshire soldiers, are already trained on the iron plains of Africa. The detachable "tentacles" of Botha's "Land Octopus" lying trench-girt in the honeycombed heart of Colenso—*i.e.*, the snipers of the Boer Army—have, with a view to severing the main artery of our communications, dominated the VALLEY OF WILLOW GRANGE with a monster implement of war.

Broad-muzzled, open-mouthed, and crouching lion-like in silent ambush a Creusot gun looks down on the railroad-seared valley; from the brazen cone of Brynbella Hill. There, high above spruit and donga

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the steel-jawed monster broods moodily, for within its sullen bosom lurks the iron-cased tempest of death.

The Kaffir may wander, the wild beast may roam unharmed o'er the veldt it dominates. Its roar alone is for the man in khaki; the blood it thirsts for wells in a Yorkshire soldier's breast.

Yes, grim death dwells in the gun-crowned hill-tops, for the British bayonet must prise open the divers "tentacles" of the Boer "Land Octopus" clutching at our arterial communications. The Creusot lion has to be driven out of his lair on the splintered hillhead, and lynx-eyed Mauser manipulators from where the seamed sides of spruit and donga mask bewhiskered Boers. Brynbella has to be taken; and the veil of night shall drape the steel-fanged rifles of the West Yorkshires as they seek out their prey upon South African hill.

Yes, Brynbella has to be taken, and the task is allotted to 7 Companies of the East Surrey's, 4 Companies of the 2nd Queen's, 1 Naval Gun, 7th Battery of R.F.A.—the composite column to be led into action by the 2nd West Yorks.

But—hush, hush—the old 14th is now advancing, striding boldly over open plateaux and probing cautiously past robeless kopjes looming skeleton-like in the evening's gloom. On its flanks in the eve-shrouded ravines, lynx-eyed Boers are twitching to release the deadly Mauser, pointing snake-like above ribs of jagged rock. But onwards, steadily onwards, the pale brown ranks of men are forging, and as they strike the iron-cored breasts of beaten paths, echoes awaken to the low growling of gun-carriage tackle, and the tramp, tramp of heavily shod feet.

The drab shadow-throwing veil of evening is now merging into the chestnut hue of twilight. Then as the great veldt swallows up the head of the regiment into its dusky heart, the writer sees amidst the disappearing soldiers faithful old comrades — the "stickers," who, from Estcourt to Vereeniging, never created a gap in the galling line of march.

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The Memory of the Past calls for a sudden and lengthy digression.

But halt, dear reader, I must digress somewhat for nature is asserting itself. Old faces gay and sad, are springing up before me. To freshly aroused and fondly cherished memories, a heart-throb thrills the bosom, and a tear-drop fills the eye.

Just now, in fancy I see that front rank of the Yorkshires marching towards Willow Grange over again. As I dwell on the grim-set faces of J. Wiseman, "Taffy" Jones, Baines, Paddy Day, and old Mick Daly, stepping shoulder to shoulder, my thoughts soar away to the scorching plains of many a foreign clime to halt and ponder on the parade, battle and burial grounds of India, Burma, Africa, and Arabia. Ah! yes; fly back to linger by the fever-laden lagoons of Ashanti, for the men who braved the deadly march to Coomassie, in which Prince Henry of Battenberg perished, headed the West Yorks up the night shrouded slopes of Brynbella. In mental picture too, a lone sentry box poised on Aden's arid breast springs up before me. Again, with startling suddenness the challenge—"Halt, who goes there," rings to my ears in a long-dead comrade's voice from the bosom of the snow-crested Himalayas.

Rangoon Regatta, 1893.

Yes, and I am once again stroke-oar of the crew, I had specially trained for the military four-oared boat race of the Rangoon, 1893 Regatta. Not a breath of air is out, not a ripple disturbs the great lake's glass like bosom. No, but along the sun-baked shore thousands of English soldiers are excitedly chattering, swaying to and fro, and loudly calling to the oarsmen representing the rowing elect of each regiment.

We are off, and a mighty roar rings up along the fringe of the "Royal Lake," for the clans of the garrison are by its water edge, and their oar-plying

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heroes are off in battle. In a moment the veil of silence shrouds three-fourths of the military assemblage, while the remaining portion cheer till every echo's tongue rings forth in Yorkshire dialect. We know the position occupied by our regimental clan, and to every wildly-waving hand and head-gear our oars are strenuously water cleaving. How the cry, "Go on the West Yorks," rings from that crowd's "Broad Acre" tongue. To send the battle-slogan home to his crews inner heart, Coxwain Stripling repeats the shoreline war-call. I pass it on to Bowman who in turn transfers it to Taylor and Warrington. Then the "four-man battle-line" flashes its long lean blades, and, where the Rangoon waters wear an oar-wounded face, the old black and yellow colours of the West Yorks show out in triumph!

Yes we won the four-oared military championship of the Rangoon, 1893 Regatta. Although illness has sapped the pith and power of the arms which plied the oar on that day of long ago, I am still proud at having trained the crew and "stroked" the triumphant galley.

Tug-o'-War Championship of Lucknow.

Yet another echo starts ringing in my ears. To its call I present you with a photo of the West Yorks old guard—the "tug-o'-war" team that in "mufti" witnessed the famous rope-pullers of the Munster Fusiliers, champions of Northern India, vanquished by the Highland Light Infantry, champions of the Southern District in the great Lucknow, 1892 military tournament. Then to the universal cry—"Yorkies, sneak back to your shells, your chance is hopeless," we retire to our dressing tent to don the jersey's of black and yellow. In a moment, headed by old Mick Daly with battle-flags in hand we advance to meet the hemp-stretching heroes of India.

The families of the vast garrison are out for the fray—women whose husbands have been "sleep-muttering" for weeks in dreams of Highland prowess, and little children who have come to see Yorkshire "chummies"

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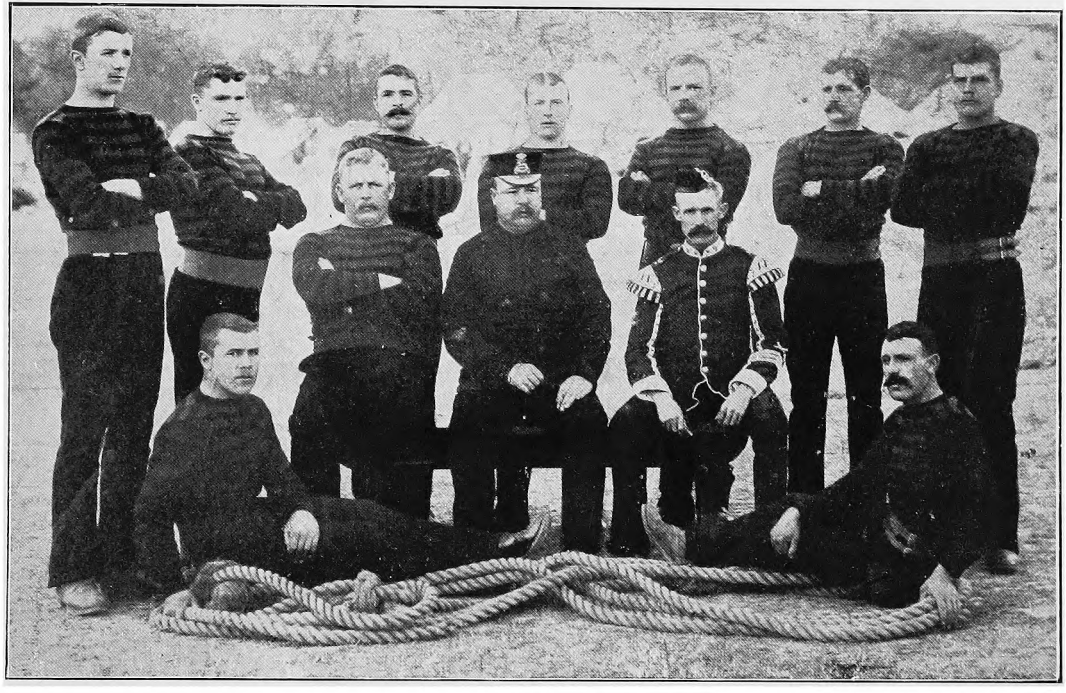
THE BOYS OF THE OLD BRIGADE.



Winners of the Lucknow Military Tug-o'-War Tournament, 1892.

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pulling for Daddy's old regiment. Yes, the married men's quarters are deserted, and around the arena every soldier's wife, son, daughter and babe, sport the colours of their favourites.

As we stand by the rope the long simmering volcano of regimental rivalry bubbles and boils to again suddenly cool down as we grip the hempen-cord, and a veil of blood-chilling expectancy envelopes the vast assemblage. At the command, "Go," the cap of the silent-lipped volcano flies off, and oh! how the mouth whose fiery breath had blown it away shouts, "Go on Yorkshire, Go on Scotland."

Another deep hush of silence steals over the vast concourse as black and gold jersied lads preserve their battle-line intact with Yorkshire prowess. The "tuggers" teeth are grinding as their bodies wilt to each sinew-snapping heave, and before their purple features the muscles of brawny arms twitch to the pulverising clutch on which the battle trembles in the balance.

But at last a mighty roar surges up from our clan as "Blue Bonnets" appear on our "hill," and the boys of "Bonnie Dundee" are being slowly drawn over their "Border." What a lurid flame of martial rivalry blazes forth as tiny sons and daughters of the regiment are being held up to view the Rose of York blooming above the Highland Heather of Scotia. Amidst a scene of indescribable excitement we drew them over, and I am proud of being one of the men who, in the black and gold jerseys of the West Yorks, won the 1892 "tug-o'-war" championship of Lucknow.

Joe Cherry's Good-bye.

Yes, and through a sad-voiced echo I can hear Joe Cherry's Celtic tongue—Joe the famous Brass Band drummer of the "West Yorks"—appealing to the Colonel to cancel his enforced home-coming order—the sequel to the Rangoon Lake drowning accident.

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The latter was ineffably sad, but when Joe Cherry with tear-laden eyes faced the Colonel, and in beseeching tones stammered, "I bate them out from England, Sir, won't you lave me bate them home again." I forgot the poignant grief of the affair, and felt jubilantly proud at being a soldier before whom Celtic Joe Cherry had, for a decade, manipulated the Bass Drum of the West Yorks. "I bate them out from England, Sir, won't you lave me bate them home again," cried Cherry in a final appeal to rescind the decree dissolving his marriage to the QUEEN of the regiment—the Bass Drum of the West Yorks. Good heavens! what a Celtic soul spoke, through the vocal channels of that old soldier's heart as he craved and begged to be allowed "bate" his own regiment back to "Merry England." Celtic-souled Cherry had, however, to make tracks for home, but his departure presented an unique scene—for his "own" band played him away; he carried its drum, and not till the quayside of the Irrawaddy was reached did he "hand in" his drumsticks. As he sailed away he kissed hands, waved a last farewell, and with his chest thrown out and head erect disappeared down the deck beating with naked fists an imaginary big drum. That was the last I saw of old Joe Cherry.

Tom Kitchen's Exploit

Yet another historical picture appears to me representing Tom Kitchen in the act of falling out of Section 4, D Company, to the orders of Captain Pennell, V.C. He has been selected as a lone unit to reconnoitre Botha's Pass for General Buller's Army. The gaping span of arid veldt between the British Camp at "Alliman's Nek," and the further ridge of Botha's Pass, beyond which the latter's Commando is supposed to be lying, represents a huge boat-shaped gullet, the bottom of which would be instantly filled with gore were any number of our men attacked in the act of crossing it. Accordingly a single soldier's

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life is deemed sufficient to risk and to Tom Kitchen—dauntless, yet unhonoured and unsung Tom Kitchen—the semaphore of the British Army is entrusted.

As he wheels away on his lone, but glorious mission, the cry "Bravo Kitchen" bursts from the ranks of war-weary men while here and there comrades, dubious of ever again seeing Tom, ejaculate, "We'll tell them of it in England, old hand." Yes, I am once again a unit of a vast force watching Tom Kitchen sinking down the British-held side of Botha's Pass, with every soldier's breath coming deeper and deeper through the wake of silence in which he disappears from view.

At last he has vanished from our ken. Then after what seems ages of suspense, a speck of brown colour glides from out the gorges deeply rutted bosom. With eye-straining effect all optics are instantly focussed on what looks like a tiny shadow coursing slowly up the precipitous face of the opposite ridge. Is it an antelope? Is it a hartebeest? No, no, for a ray of sunshine, glinting through a fissure in the beetling cliff, intercepts the tiny shadow's path, and as the latter crosses the golden streak the apparition suddenly vanishes. The shroud of mystery has been pierced by an arrow-like shaft of light, and within its folds we discern khaki-clad Tom Kitchen still gripping the signal-flag of the British Army. What a thrill of martial fervour runs through the soldiers' minds, and how it begs a cheer for "D" Company's fearless Private. But we dare not murmur athwart this sunken zone of war. No, for abaft yonder ridge, towards which a lone British soldier is climbing, hordes of bewhiskered Boers are "posted" as bivouacking. With breathless anxiety we watch him coolly toiling up the opposite slope, expecting every moment Mauser fire-tongues to belch forth, and Tom Kitchen to fall like a dropped rag between a British semaphore and a Lee-Metford rifle. But no! Fate ordained otherwise, for though hearts

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throb widely as Tom vanishes o'er the topmost crest, in a moment or so he re-appears upon the scraggy skyline. Then, waving above Tom Kitchen of the "West Yorks," a signal-flag tells us that the Boers have "scooted."

Glorious and unexcelled for cool, dogged, bravery—yet not until to-day—nine years after the Boer war, did the world hear of how Tom Kitchen painted Botha's Pass with a dare-all scouting exploit,—a non-supported, non-stimulated, one-man act of British gallantry.

Route Marching through the Green Lanes of Yorkshire.

Yes, and once again my heart beats wildly with soldier-boy emotion. To it rolls o'er history—recalling barrack walls, the stentorian voice of my old Colonel and the crashing music of a military band. How the old March Past, "Ca Ira," echoes through a once familiar parade ground drawing nearer, and nearer till at last the gate flanges of its grey portals fly open. Then, Yorkshire lads and lassies cheer the old regiment led out for field manœuvres by J. Wiseman, "Taffy" Jones, Mick Daly and Paddy Day.

Away through hawthorn fringed roads, flanked by fields aflame with wild flowers, march the bonnie boys in scarlet, every hillside echo paying back the notes of martial music, every roadside echo the tramp of warrior feet. How entrancing the picture presented by that blood-red ribbon of soldiery. Above it scintillates a crest of steel-tipped rifles. Beneath it banks of pied daisies star the emerald carpet of its pastoral route.

Away they go, with swing and swagger, the crimson tunics o'ershadowing the choicest flower of nature pluming the landscape's summer robe. But the brilliancy of the martial scarlet is at last checkmated as an ivy-embowered cottage door frames a pink-cheeked maiden, and red-lipped kisses are blown to soldier laddies by a Yorkshire rose. Onward they

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roll with brows erect, hearts aglow and headgears poised jauntily, for—

" Over the helmets the brass spikes are gleaming,
Curb-chains are blazing on every chin,
Love-fires between them in young eyes are beaming,
Aflame to the lass of the moorside and glen.

" Proud are the bosoms 'neath red tuuics swelling,
Prouder the mien of each helmeted brow,
For athwart crimson ranks ruby lips are a-telling
How fond of their soldier boys lassies are now."

Auld Acquaintance.

But, now, this glorious martial picture is replaced by a regimental farewell scene in which I discern, gathered around the old depot gateway at York, sad-faced lads and lassies, and sad faced parents too. The "2nd West Yorks" are on the "roaster," the barrack gates are closely clamped and, outside the latter, friends of the regiment group moodily, awaiting the appearance of the departing boys. At last sharp words of command float over the ancient barrack walls. Then, as the musty echoes of hoary aisle and corridor pay back the roll of thundering drums, measured footsteps draw near and nearer till, as the great gates fly open,

" Should auld acquaintance be forgot
And never brought to mind,
Should auld acquaintance be forgot
And days of old lang-syne?"

floats, tear-laden, from the band behind which Paddy Day, Mick Hanlon, J. Wiseman, Mick O'Reilly, and "Taffy" Jones head the West Yorks for the scorching plains of India.

The people are woe-laden and downcast, for the memory arousing bars:

" We twa hae run about the braes
And pu'd the gowans fine,"

strike the keynote of many an old time gathering, and recall the whole-souled grasp of many a vanished hand.

How the music floats in soul-reaching strains down main street and byeway, curbing and checking the most wayward young blood and tear filling the eye

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of many a faded veteran whose cheeks once bloomed rosy above the white-faced tunics of the "West Yorks." Down, too, in the very heart of castle and cottage bonny maidens are weeping: for that tune, to which their young hearts are throbbing, defines that red-coated lovers are going away. But look! look how "Bonny Mary of Argyll," the pretty parlourmaid, skips atticwards and, through its tiny aperture, waves a tear damped handkerchief to the lad who, in passing their old street corner trysting-place, holds his helmet rifle-length on high. Suddenly a band-staff shoots above a sea of brass instruments, the latter cease playing, and then naught save the tramp, tramp of martial feet breaks the solemn silence of the scene.

The Girl I Left Behind Me.

In a moment a nervous tremor seizes the crowd, its rose-cheeked maidens become suddenly pale and then, spontaneously, lad and lassie rush to where "a bass drum movement" heralds the farewell measure of the drums and fifes of the "West Yorks." Amidst a titter of countless tongues the side drums of the old 14th are hitched and in an instant, kissing and courting the rays of dazzling "Old Sol," the bass drum of the fife band is poised on Drummer Hart's expansive bosom.

He's in a blaze of glory for, above the white-faced tunics of the old 14th, sunbeams are dancing on his instrument's, battle-emblazoned crest, and abaft his scarlet-robed shoulders the fiery eyes of his tiger skin proclaim him a monarch of war. A murmur of applause—a chuckle of delightful expectancy—runs through the crowd as he throws out his chest and jerks back his head automatically. Then the lassies, whose soldier laddies hold the shrilly fife in hand, take up the post of honour athwart "the drums" of the foreign-going regiment.

In elbowing jealously they wedge each other out—aye, jealous of the fife's tiny lips through which each

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soldier laddie will play to them his farewell love tune. In silent and breath-held anticipation they hearken for the fife-voiced feelings of each departing heart to ring out above the doleful "tramp, tramp" of measured footsteps.

Proud of his manhood, and proud of his thunder-holding instrument, Drummer Hart is twitching to connect, with stroke of stick, the vocal cord of that musical "orb," palpitating neath his red tunic, to the war-pulse of the bass drum resting on his tiger-skin adorned bosom.

How eagerly the lassies watch for that drum-stick evolution which heralds the opening of the bass drum's thunder-rolling tongue. Electric-like, Drummer Hart's arm flashes upwards, and then a padded ball whirls wildly above his scarlet-robed shoulders. Electric-like it suddenly swoops downwards and then, from out the last echo-rending boom of the combined drums, the "shrilly" fifes pipe—

"O! ne'er shall I forget the night
The stars were bright above me,
And gently lent their silvery light
When first she vowed she loved me.
But now I'm bound for an Indian camp
Kind heaven; then pray mind me,
How swift the hours did pass away
With the girl I left behind me."

"They're off, they're off!" huzzahs surging up around the departing soldiers, as hearts beat wildly with leave-taking emotion, and windows vibrate to the opening roll of the thundering drums. The fifes, in shrieking tones, voice the feelings of each sorrowing soldier; but, above all the soulful sounds and glittering aspects of this farewell demonstration, Drummer Hart's drum-bearing bosom forms the shining star. Look, look at how, in the low, tear-dropping bars of "The Girl I Left Behind Me," his drum-sticks kiss, pat, caress, and woo the lordly instrument's pulsating breast. Then through waves of deep, rumbling music, one hears

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the tremulous sobbing, sighing and crooning of the bass drum's inner heart. It is glorious, yet soul-sinking, the muffled voice of that majestic instrument, so full of thunder when, in bars of ancient music, the fifes rally the red-coated lads of England's "Broken Square." It is glorious, the mystical manner in which Drummer Hart makes his instrument part and parcel of the bosom-swelling with military pride neath his scarlet tunic. How it answers each music-moulding touch! How it rocks each lad and lassie to sleep in a cradle of love! How it chases rough thoughts away, as it purrs, croons, sighs, and sobs to the love-fluttering crotchets, quavers, and semi-quavers of the fife and piccolo.

Around the monarch of the band, tiny choristers (side drums) are eagerly waiting to join in that wild outburst of leave-taking emotion with which the drums and fifes of the West Yorks will pour out the last notes of "The Girl I Left behind Me." The soul-gates of military glory and military sadness are at last unclamped. The fifes, in shrieking tones, pour out their final bars, and above Drummer Hart's roaring drum two buff-coloured balls chase each other with whirl-wind velocity. Through the ranks of men the fife is screaming. Through the crowded street the thunder of the drums is rolling but, above all, skipping and tripping on invisible feet, Drummer Hart's drum-sticks form the crowning crest to which all eyes feverishly turn. Ever and anon they disappear, with magical speed to dance deliriously on the bass drum's heart, as he makes it the medium through which he ventilates his Celtic imagination.

Then, triumphantly inspired, he, with bewildering drumstick evolution, rends the memory-keeping echoes of the instrument's battle-emblazoned breast and from out the cleft float thunderous sounds of far-off triumph and far-off wailing. You are transported into realms of ancient love and ancient war, for in that big drum's voluminous tongue you hear the

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victorious cheers and volleys of the old 14th at Inkerman and the wild weeping of the womankind who saw them off, to the air of "The Girl I Left Behind Me."

Approaching Willow Grange clouds of impending aerial and martial disruption loom up on every side.

But let us hark back once more to where the khaki-clad "West Yorks" plod with faces set and rifles tightly gripped towards the gun-holding skull of Brynbella. At last the scene of action looms up ahead—Brynbella Hill whose Creusot gun we are out to capture, and lone Beacon Hill, 1,500 feet above its base, are in view overshadowing everything around Willow Grange.

Like the men of the "old brigade," who sleep their last long sleep far away from merry England, lads from Yorkshire towns and moors will, ere many suns go down, rest, too, on an alien hillside.

Atmospherical Africa, unrivalled for the awe-inspiring features and colossal destructive power of its thunderstorms, intends to have "Thor," the god of aerial conflict, flash his red banners of lightning above the coming battle scene. As we enter the amphitheatre, having Brynbella for a stage and a scowling sky for a "counterpane," the electrical breath of overhanging thunder-clouds is depressing to almost a stifling extent.

Deeper and deeper grows the sullen silence of the calm—the haunting prelude to atmospherical and martial combustion. Like the thunderbolts of heaven, brooding moodily above the arid plain, thunderbolts of human slaughter lurk where Lee-Metford and Mauser, Pom-Pom and Creusot, hold their life-destroying pills.

"Decks" are cleared for action; the deserted railway line bears no snorting engine now. Not a single quadruped roams the wastes round Willow Grange; not a single smoke curl wreaths a chimney stack. The people have flown. All signs of human life have

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vanished, while the howling of foodless dogs in the deserted homes of white-livered Colonists cap with a despairing note the dismal prelude to impending aerial disruption and martial strife.

Soon, very soon, will the lightning of old "King Thor's" thunderbolts give each fissured kopje a grinning corpse-like face. Soon, very soon, will the "tentacles" of the Colenso "Octopus," detached to snap the link of our communicating chain, fling out the thunderbolts of Mauser and Creusot to counteract the "tentacle" prizing work of Tommy Atkins plying Lee-Metford and Bayonet on Brynbella Hill.

Lower and lower falls the amphitheatre's "counterpane" until the thunder-columns, massing for atmospherical combat, almost graze the sapless kopjes sentinelling the South African wastes. As we swing along towards Willow Grange the homeless canines, huge St. Bernard's, Mastiff's, and Wolfhounds, hovering like famished vulpines, round the khaki-clad column, frame a picture worthy of being titled "Dogs of War."

Nature has placed the silent and sullen warpath of a scowling wilderness before us and through its still-born herbage we are marching—marching to slake the lone veldt's thirsting bosom with Boer and British gore.

What is this war for? "barks" Tommy, as the gaping jaws of a bald kopje seem to yawn in mouldering slumber above the limitless waste. What is this war for? again "barks" Tommy, as the deserted canines seek succour from soldiers used as "cat paws" by the runaway masters of these self-same dogs.

But, despite all, Tommy's big heart will clear its big way o'er the field of battle, as Tommy's small pay clears its very small way in the circumscribed area of a soldier's social lot.

When all is over the runaway may sneak homewards over Tommy's unmarked grave-head, but little

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the latter will reck 'neath the sod on which he fought his fight and played his final part. Yes, naught can disturb his battle-field slumber—he of the rank and file whose pockets were empty, whose stomach was empty, whose gun was empty, but whose heart was full of fury when he fell with bayonet pointing towards the foe.

Another Digression on behalf of Physique Preserving Morality, and the Memory of the Noble Women who nursed England's Old Brigade.

Once again I must digress somewhat. Yes, manœuvre for the sake of soldiers yet unborn, manœuvre for the sake of England's future army as well as pay tribute to the memory of the true-sexed, noble women whose offspring formed her glorious Thin Red Line.

This digression is rendered imperative by the corrupt conditions of modern social life—conditions which are sapping the heart's blood of a once all-conquering race and spewing forth instead a fibreless breed of white-livered people.

When alluding to the soldier who fought his fight and played his part the public will snap out: "What of it—he was only an humble PRIVATE—food for shot and shell." Yes, I admit he went to his account to satiate the greed of Creusot and Mauser, but where were the modern Shakespears, the social gods of England when the latter's power trembled in the balance and its crown was almost kicked into Table Bay? Where were the heroes of modern England, the dank-haired, snake-faced playwrights and artists who, by holding the mirror up to nature in a manner pleasing to the bald-headed roué and sexless suffragette, dominate its present-day life?

Where were they during the South African war? The echoes round many a poor soldier's grave answer sadly: seated in riverside bungalows. Yes, garnishing for stage presentation the offal of the divorce courts,

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and scoffing at the retiring and reserved habits of the womankind whose offspring carved with sabre-point on England's diadem of glory the ineffaceable and immortal nomenclature—Balaclava.

On a wet day the drop-down from a Boer's whisker would smother a dozen of the inky little, tabloid-taking, sex-problem playwrights, in the slime of whose suggestive plays and novels the up-to-date parent-mocking, white-veined, dead-eyed youth of both sexes wallow.

Notwithstanding this deplorable fact England expects to breed a race of soldiers. Yes, notwithstanding that dead walls and hoardings are ablaze with the photos and praises of men whose pens are given to inoculating the youth of both sexes with the virus of profligacy.

Englishmen, hearken to the conversation indulged in by young people when leaving certain music halls and theatres, and you will quickly realise why London trembled and rocked hysterically during the Stepney battle.

Hunchbacks can paint from the nude and become heroes through a bold treatment of their shameless subject. The public, however, forget that youthful minds perverted by a close study of that hunchback's "work" begets a breed of bloodless cripples. Englishmen, for goodness sake "fight shy" of the anæmic sex problem scribe and that unsexed interloper in man's affairs—the woman who, despite inability to earn what would buy bird seed for a cuckoo clock, persists in wearing the breeches.

Effeminacy loomed large enough during the South African war. Don't allow your houses of Parliament to be canopied permanently with hobble skirts. Cast your right eye back on "the white flag" incidents of the late South African campaign, then turn your left optic on policemen's ears getting cuffed and State officials hats getting blocked by females, and you will readily realise what a swilly dish has replaced John

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Bull's plum-pudding. You will readily realise what a swilly dish Kaiser William has his eyes on. If this unsexing "disease" Higher Education, should emancipate provincial womenkind from the "thraldom" of housewifery and motherhood, what a grim-visaged fighting-front the country will possess 50 years hence. The mothers of the "Light Brigade" would run away from a mouse. The modern mothers of a certain corps would "fag puff" in a charnel house and ride horseback straddle-wise; yet their sons would not face a fire-fly on a Boer mealy stalk. "The hand that rocks the cradle rules the world." Save, then, the mocked at modern Mrs. Grundy, strenuously upholding the principles of the women before whose pedestal of crystal virtue and queenly reserve the soldiers of Wellington bared their heads. Save the modern Mrs. Grundy descended from the women whose offspring formed England's "Thin Red Line," whose sons flashed the British bayonet at Savastopol and Inkerman, and whose cavalry lads "Plunged through the battery's smoke" behind Cardigan. Save the female descendants of the women whose sons laid the pedestal of England's military glory on the grave of Napoleon. Save the modern Mrs. Grundy descended from the women who gave to England the military arm that licked the universe. Save her from that cat-woman who bids youth scoff at all parental control, and who is driving the fallen "professionals" off the streets, superseding them with "emancipated" parent-defying amateurs.

Ah! yes, forget not the pedestal of golden virtue and queenly mien at whose base the Cardigans, Raglans, and Wellingtons laid the laurels of many a hard-fought conflict. The Mrs. Grundy I allude to never "described" the "grand circle" in a gymnasium hall, or cut the "figure of eight" behind her husband's poll and before her lodger's face in a "Chase me Charlie Dance." No, her gymnastics took the form of cooking, housekeeping and bed-making. But her sons

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were old-fashioned, for they knew not how to bandage a pin-prick, or apply first-aid remedies to a crushed bunion. No, but they rode through the "Valley of Death" when comrades' heads and arms were being blown off, and with an exulting roar they plunged to meet Napoleon's "Old Guard." Oh! yes, but she and they were old-fashioned compared with the heroines who bore the bloomers, and heroes who bore the petticoats to victory in the famous Battle of Stepney. Remember I have not stepped outside the domain of this little booklet in writing on behalf of England's future army. No, exposing the immoral and physique-sapping elements destroying that well-spring of manhood from which flowed its old time fighting stock, comes well within its compass.

I am no puritan, but I have lived in the cannon-roaring, Mauser-barking atmosphere of that HYMNIC Puritanism which held England at bay for two-and-a-half years. To meet other great nations in mental ingenuity and physical endurance, you must raise soldiers from people living outside the domain of the modesty-mocking novelist who, whilst hiding in an atmosphere of cowering carnality, peered from behind drawn window-blinds at the last war bound militia regiment going away. Is it because a man becomes a chronic bookworm through inability to participate in the games of the play-ground, that he is entitled to sneer at the canons and conventions of dead and gone philosophers whose literary boots the average present-day word-painter would be deemed unfit to polish? A fourth-class bookworm may expose myriads of ungrammatical holes in the stuff I am penning. Beyond that, however, the voice of a Devonshire tinker—a militiaman who has done something for his country would, on matters concerning its physical and moral welfare, have much more weight with me. If invaders were among us to-morrow the latter would "stick it" to the finish, whilst of the former a week's hunger would leave not even a greasy spot behind.

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Finally, if the "gods" of the Empire are not soon represented by individuals other than sex-problem playwrights, German women will be tossing England's pancakes one of those Shrove Tuesdays coming on.

Now, straight ahead for Willow Grange.

But halt, for in fancy I can hear some old comrades shouting, "Look to your front 1984, look to your front, you are now on the road to Brynbella." Yes, Sergeants Vallette and Laracy, I thoroughly realize it, for on my belt hang two large pouches of British blessings, and on my shoulder a Lee-Metford missionary eager to point with bayonet "his" lectures on English evangelizing work. Yes, and as a supplemental benediction perforate with bullet any alien numbskull failing to appreciate the elevating characteristics of John Bull. That is, I daresay, Sergeants Vallette and Laracy why we are marching under a scowling aerial canopy. That is, why King "Thor" intends tc unleash in counter-demonstration to the coming Brynbella fight his thunderbolts of aerial war.

Never mind, old comrades, the swamps, lagoons, spruits and dongas we travelled over were singularly erratic in conformation, and if I "side-track" occasionally you must allow of my travelling o'er land boasting a camel-backed topography—a very disturbing element to "my finely grained pen." We all know that apart from the soldier-tumbling topography there were many other disturbing elements in South Africa—the Bible-reading Boer for instance being an earthquake producer in himself. But at last we are drawing near Willow Grange, overhung with thunderland drapery, and shaping like a huge battlefield-graveyard about to be freshly consecrated with human gore.

The scowling face of the heavens with its cloud-masked batteries of fire; the scowling features of the Boers hiding behind arid ribs of kloof and donga; the grim-set faces of the plodding soldiers; the lowered

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heads and drooping sterns of the ever-haunting dogs, present a picture from whose every feature glare the ghastly eyes of South African war.

We have neither drum or fife to pierce the oppressive silence of "King Thor's" over-head battle zone, nor the soul-sinking underfoot desolation of the voiceless veldt.

Brynbella at Hand.

But hush! hush!! for the dogs of war—the 2nd Queen's, 2nd East Surreys, crew of the Naval Gun, 7th Battery R.F.A., and the good old "West Yorks"—hovered around by deserted canines, are, at last, in the heart of Willow Grange, treading softly and listening for the enemy with the air-scenting instincts of men at war. Colonel Kitchener at our head, too, moves warily, for he, a Kerryman, hailing from the home of Captain Moonlight's sharp-shooters, often heard the mid-night bark of the bailiff-slaying Blunderbuss. Oh! yes, he knows that the possibilities of the "corduroy boy" were once limitless in Kerry when, with gun in hand, he crouched in ambush behind a wayside rock. Even to-day the Blunderbuss barks occasionally in the Magillicuddy Mountains, awakening to a rain drawing degree, the anatomical echoes of Kate Kearney's "Big Drum."

In slow measured steps the column is now proceeding, and to low, ominous commands the heavy "sough-sough" of plodding feet drops to a muffled gait, through which, as the artillery horses are suddenly checked, rings the metallic clanking of gun-carriage tackle. In a moment, the low, growling of the lumbering wheels ceases altogether, for a halt is called, and in silent and wondering expectancy we stand to arms within sight of Brynbella.

We now sever connection with the battery—for uphill bayonet work is to ensue, and until day-break the cold steel and Lee-Metford bullet can alone pre-

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vail. In grim muteness we await the order for battle, but as we are in the land of the wily Boer—the monkey of Majuba—"slim" strategy is to form the keynote of every further evolution till the goal of our ambition is achieved. Yes, Colonel Kitchener's "thinking box" knows that theatrical "codology," though beautiful in plume-flashing evolution, finds little favour on the foodless and bedless field of war.

Impetuosity must be suppressed and in solemn silence we receive orders for a feint attack on Byrnbella. It is "delivered" in the most menacing manner possible, and then we retire on Beacon Hill, a lone peak directly opposite the object of our attack. Close, and closer grows the density of the already overpowering atmosphere until the air smells sulphurous, as we start to climb the kopje's almost perpendicular breast.

Up we go, monkey-like, yet minus the latter's alacrity; for with one hand keeping the rifle clear of bramble and boulder, grotesque and ill-balanced attitudes define the rudderless "one claw" action of our "catch-as-catch can" climb.

The Aerial Storm bursts—Hailstones like Golfballs.

In the midst of this slippery, heart-galling Manœuvre the long-pending atmospherical combat is initiated. Suddenly, the heavens are filled with a weird whizzing noise as if myriads of unseen birds were speeding on wild air-cutting pinions, across the inky dome of the cloud-laden sky. Near, and nearer draws the strangely humming sound, till a blizzard of hailstones, resembling golf-balls in size, shoot hissing to the ground indenting each soldier's helmet and cutting and punishing the exposed parts of the body severely. Although we are on a South African kopje off whose metallic-like breast phenomenal thunder-storms often drove the savage lion to his lair, yet hail of this kind had not fallen within the memory of the oldest Natalian. But the accuracy of

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the ancient proverb, "every cloud has a silver lining," was in this soul-depressing instance demonstrated in an altogether welcome, yet uproarious degree.

An Ear Deafening Canine Stampede.

The redeeming feature of this unprecedented hail-stone visitation proclaimed itself in a dog-tongued "Oratorio" the howling nature of which grew awe-inspiring as, with every major and minor musical stop in their bodies working at high pressure, the canines flew pell-mell down-hill. Yes, proclaimed it-self in the helter-skelter stampede of the hordes of homeless dogs whose yelping and yelling, as skull-pulverising hailstones, played "YOU MUST GO HOME TO-NIGHT," on rawny rib and muzzle made a few Belfast men in the regiment home-sick, so faithfully did it duplicate the uproar of many an Orange and Green affray. Yes, home-sick and blood-thirsty, so vividly did the "sacredness" of the dog-tongued "Oratorio" recall the 12th of July in Belfast, and the howling of the Falls Road and Shank Hill fire-eaters for the reading of the Riot Act. Comparing the tumult of an oldtime Mexican cattle ranch stam-pede to this, Beacon Hill "dog-din" would be quite as silly as likening a Monk's wake to a tinker's wedding. Travel where you will, you must come back to Erin and strike Belfast on July the 12th, to realise any-thing equal in length, strength, and ferocity to the Beacon Hill tallyho.

Locating The Enemy's Gun.

The Naval Gun still linked to the column opened fire from the base of our kopje on the Boer strong-hold for the purpose of eleciting a reply, thus enabling us to locate the exact position of the enemy's gun. No sooner had the bellowing voice of Jack Tar's bulldog died away than a tongue of fire shot out from where on Brynbella hilltop the Boer lion had its lair. A few moments of sullen silence followed and then we heard

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that strange sibilant sound increasing in density till a Creusot shell sang a Banshee's death-song as it careened in cresent flight above our heads. On the accomplishment of this vital bit of strategy we retired off Beacon Hill in full view of the Boers, completing our final deceptive evolution by again returning under cover of the night, to a position athwart that which we had just vacated. Here we lay in single file with the last sunset, the last glow of eventide and the last flicker of twilight gone for ever from the gaze of many a tough, full-blooded Yorkshire soldier. Ere to-morrow's sun goes down many of our lads will sleep 'neath crossless mounds on Brynbella's barren bosom. Yes, never more to colour with scarlet coat the sombre heart-side of a Yorkshire cot, or flame with a breast of red the nut brown robe of a home-side moorland.

The Ghostly Silence of the Inky Veldt.

It would be now about 9 p.m. and with the vanishing of twilight came a death like silence—a silence deeper than ever settled o'er tropical waters sleeping 'neath a breathless Oriental sky. The still heart of night lay shrouded in a veil of inky darkness ; not even a withered blade of long grass rustled in mouldering slumber ; not even a whispering zephyr coursed above the barren veldt. But, if the wings of war were closely folded, a thousand human lions crouched on the ghostly kopjes, every spruit and donga held rows on rows of blood-scenting nostrils, above which lynx-like optics peered out across a limitless sea of gloom. Overshadowing all reigned a gulf of haunting silence—that silence before which heads are bared in the village grave-yard—that memory-arousing thought—conjuring silence, through which the gambols and rambles of boyhood are incessantly reviewed.

The Thunderbolts of Heaven Loosed.

In a moment a bolt of fire bores a hole in the inky

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heart of midnight, and as the dazzling flash of tropical lightning silvers our hillside, a thousand white-robed figures stand out in bold relief upon its soldier dotted breast. In another moment the bolts of heaven are loosed, and then the vast veldt vibrates to the thunder of King "Thors" artillery.

Such rain as follows, such thunder as follows! Seven hugh cork-screw flashes of lightning simultaneously wriggle through the sky. Then the heavens seem suddenly developed into a hugh side drum, and to-and-fro bellowing, and roaring across its limitless breast, King Thors ponderous drumsticks beat their awe-inspiring "long roll." Picture yourself on the South African veldt, awaiting a dawn of day conflict, under the deluge, thunder and lightning of its phenomenal atmospherical eruptions, and you will realise what quality of heart was required to keep a semi-empty stomach going for two and a-half years o'er the bedless and tentless sod. Ever and anon the inky veldt represents a sea of silvery billows, as kopje on kopje is robed in a garb of ghastly pallor, by the flashes of dazzling light. This atmospheric disturbance left such an impression behind, that even now at the least sound of thunder the whole scene flashes before the mind—the awesome picture of lightning-lit, bullet-swept, thunder-rolling Willow Grange. I remember watching a thunder-storm in Dagshai, in the Himalayas and one of the men remarking, "None of you fellows ever been in South Africa"? No; well then you have never heard thunder. He was partly right.

Up the Inky Heart of Brynbella.

Midnight had now passed; the storm had ceased, and through the sullen silence of a pre-battle bivouac we waited for the onslaught on Brynbella. At 2 a.m., when the winds of the lone veldt seemed to be whispering to Death, across the blank heart of Willow Grange, ominous mutterings rolled along our watchful ranks—the muffled commands to drop our "can-

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teens" lest their jingling noise might arouse the slumbering enemy. Cautiously we laid them on the barren ground, and then to the order of "Left Wheel" we filed, or rather probed, our way past Colonel Kitchener. As each party of a dozen or so went by, Colonel Kitchener gave the command, "Halt, front, fix bayonets." Then as magazines were charged and the cold steel hitched, the listening heart of night heard the "death rattle of war"—the metallic clank of bayonet and breach-lock. Addressing each party, Colonel Kitchener spoke as follows, at least these were the words uttered to the first dozen men of whom I was the twelfth?—"You will march with your rifle at the advance, twelve-pace intervals, and capture the gun on Brynbella. Remember no firing—the bayonet, the bayonet. A Briton is a Briton, a Boer is a Boer? He is your enemy, and wears a soft hat, Go!"

Out we went to meet the trap-set mouth of modern war, hidden serpent-like on the South African hillside. Out we went, not like the "Thin Red Line" of yore, but a bannerless, drumless khaki-clad crew led by guide Mr. Chapman, a local farmer.

A Fatal Contretemps.

For a few hundred yards we kept our "intervals," after which we lost all reckoning in the aimless object-hiding hillside gloom. Then commenced a closing-up telescopic evolution, each party recoiling back on the next, until we were hopelessly intermixed, and all of a lump, in the blank heart of night, on the pathless hill.

Hush, dont blame us, you men who were at that moment sitting round the cosy bar-room fires of merry England—the electric arc shone brightly on your frothy bumpers—not a ray of light illumined our aimless path of death.

The "East Surrey's" who were advancing in the same direction on our right must have deviated and gone too much to their left; or we must have sheered off somewhat. Anyhow, without the least warning, men

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of the former rushed from out the darkness across our front rank barring further progress. Being unable to realise friend or foe dire complications ensued. In a moment a wild desire existed to blaze away at the obscure objects in front. In another the fear of spilling British blood by doing so was almost paralysing. But battle light gleamed in the soldier's staring eyes; shots were exchanged, and not till bayonet met bayonet in the gloom of night did we realise that instead of a bewhiskered foe, men in khaki stood facing each other. This altogether unpreventable contretemps resulted in the death of poor Drummer Russell of our corps, while the "East Surreys" had two fatal cases.

Col. Kitchener to the Rescue.

Colonel Kitchener now came up and reformed the different sections. Advancing again we were much concerned whether the Boers had, on hearing our firing, "scooted" or gripped more tightly their guns in preparation for deadly trigger-pulling. The cloud of suspense was soon perforated, for Brynbella's head loomed close on high and towards that coveted crest our bayonets were drawn magnetic-like. Arriving at the base of the hill from which a wall ran straight up to its gun-holding cranium we were formed up on either side with a view to preventing a repetition of the previous entanglement.

Taken at the Bayonet's Point.

It was now 2.50 a.m. The base of the hill-top holding a Creusot lion was at last reached, and gleaming bayonets—the fangs of the British bulldog—were eager to dislodge the steel-jawed lord of Willow Grange. Like a voice from the silent grave the command "Forward" ran along the British lines, and then with frowning brows, flashing eyes and grim-set molars, the "West Yorks," led by Major Hobbs, went at the "double" up the mountain. Everyone expected the front rank to mat the hill 'neath

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a blaze of Boer rifle fire. Everyone expected to see the second, or supporting, companies of the old 14th scrambling on, stumbling on, over their falling leaders.

A blaze of fire from the Creusot lion's mouth; a hissing, spitting, crackling from its guard of jackals (Mausers) were momentarily expected to eat up the 2nd West Yorks and pass them on to where, in spectral strife, the skeleton legions of England follow the mighty Wellington. But no! such was not to be the case; for the Boers, dreading the night-veiled fangs of the British bulldog, "scooted." As our first line swept the summit a Boer sentry challenged —punctuating every syllable with rifle fire. Then, the "ping-pong" articulation of the Mauser rolled along the bold profiles of ghostly hills whose caves and dens once formed the home of the South African lion.

Scarce had the veldt echoes rolled back the Mausers' bark than a naked bayonet gleamed where its mouth flames stabbed out from the inky hillside. Then the tongues of fire suddenly ceased and with them the life of a lion-hearted Boer. A rush, a cheer, another bayonet sheathed in a Boer's breast and the hill is taken. In a wild stampede from the dreaded steel the Boers leave their horses behind but the gun-pit in which the Creusot lion had crouched is empty—the lair of the steel-jawed monster is deserted.

Brynbella, long dreaded Brynbella, is, however, taken and Willow Grange need no longer bow its British head to the dominating frown of the hilltop. The snorting engine will race free and unfettered once again across its steel railed breast to salute with smoking funnel and roaring throat, British homes and hamlets.

A Mistaken Triumph.

Proudly we "form up" on Brynbella's coveted crest; proud at having driven to seek a lair far afield of our communicating lines this main tentacle of Colenso's many armed "Octopus." Thus we had

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our first brush with the terrible man who fights or runs away and on this occasion lived to fight very effectively two hours later.

Glaringly unmindful of any consequential results we lay about on the hill merrily discussing our duel with the East Surreys and hurricane capture of coveted Brynbella. Yes, we waxed enthusiastic over the discomfiture of the stampeding Boers whom we fondly imagined would not cease running on our side of Pretoria.

A Deadly Dawn of Day Conflict—Boers moving like Stalking Tigers across the Hoary Kopjes.

But, alas, the cold grey dawn of coming day was to shortly break on the South African hills and with its leaden gaze a leaden tempest of death would sweep across Brynbella's shelterless bosom. We knew the Boers owed us a receipt for the heavy debt we had paid, but we little guessed that during the inky hours before dawn the death warrant of many a Yorkshire boy was in the making. Every disappearing star signalled the vanishing of a "milestone" on our road of doom. Every steely signal of awakening dawn, the last glimmer of worldly light a Yorkshire soldier would gaze upon.

Slowly, very slowly, the yawning, eye-blinking face of day stole over the bald-pated hills, the arid, slatey, sides of which duplicated to a haunting degree the seedy garb of morn. Soon, very soon, its battle-breeding face would scowl down on Willow Grange as it passed above the sleeping valley to fix its eyes of death on men in khaki uniform. At last it came to Brynbella, grey and cold, and with its sickly light the Mauser-fanged jaws of modern war snapped viciously.

As its tawny torch revealed to bewhiskered Boers the whereabouts of the West Yorkshires a leaden messenger of death whistled above our heads initiating the first and last fight of many a "Broad Acre" laddie. In a moment the cone of Brynbella resembled a hive

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of disturbed bees as we flew to arms, skirmished out in battle array and, with enemy seeking eyes, scanned the surrounding hilltops. As we peered through the feeble light of dawn every optic was focussed on a hoary peak still deeply shadowed by the tail of night's dark drapery. Before our mystified eyes shadowy forms moved like spectres of death across its rutted breast, then suddenly disappeared from view as if prowling Boers had skirted the zone of war heedless of our proximity. But no! Bewhiskered fighters passed not on, for, answering the draped signals of the lone veldt's "FIREY CROSS," they trooped to that hill, then moved like stalking tigers above its breast to sink suddenly into invisible trenches.

A Screaming Aerial Canopy.

Another crying banshee—a whistling bullet—soon spread across the wan face of dawn after which a graveside stillness ensued. Then chasing each other in ghostly flight, messengers of death set up weird hissing sounds as they careened towards us from the enemy's kopje. With mute, but questioning, looks the units of the "West Yorks" stared at each other. Stared as brave men do when fighting death in the cooped up furnace of a sinking ship, for that looming hilltop held in its dominating cone a Boer arsenal. In an instant, we realised being the shuttle-cocks of the enemy on yonder towering hill and that Brynbella was their battle board.

Impressed by the irredeemable nature of this crux, Major Fry, commanding D Company, shouted in a voice of florid intonation, "Lie down, men; lie down and build head cover!" Like armadilloes scooping out a bed of clay, we bored deep and piled high until ringworm-like Brynbella's face was dotted with impromptu sangars.

In wild, erratic flight the bullets spat and hissed overhead weird and uncanny sounds mingling in the air as messengers of death coursed across the sallow

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face of morn. After an hour of wild firing on both sides, the Boers, with their usual invisibility, brought a Vicars' Maxim into play, quickly getting the range for the riflemen.

The Fulfilment of General Butler's Prophecy.

Then the Boer volcano shot its battle torch on high till every echo in the veldt rang with the Maxims' "pom-pom" chant and the Mausers' "ping-pong" litany.

In the midst of the battle's din a vague and strangely stupefying sensation possessed my mind, and then beside me a voice, as if from out a tomb, seemed to say, "I told you so; I told you so."

In a second a spectral picture of the Soldiers' Institute, Snargate, came before my eyes and then a scene I witnessed in its interior in 1896 slowly unfolded itself. In another moment I was one of a vast audience of soldiers facing towards its stage and on the latter a British General lectured on modern warfare. In a solemn voice he declared "that before many years are over a big war will eventuate in South Africa" (loud laughter). "Don't laugh," cried the General; "the Boers will be your enemies and you will find they are men who fight shoulder to shoulder and shoot straight."

With a rasping bang I was aroused from my reverie for the rock before me was splintered with Boer rifle fire telling me trumpet-toned that Brynbella hilltop, not Snargate, lay 'neath my feet. As its shattered remnants strew the ground, "I told you so; I told you so;" again rang in my ears. It was the hall echo of the Soldiers' Institute, Snargate, speaking to me in the prophetic voice of General Butler. Ah! yes; it rolled to Brynbella hilltop from far away Dover for around me a certificate of General Butler's veracity was being writ in the gore of many a dead and dying comrade.

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The 2nd West Yorks at Bay.

Yes, the blood of Yorkshire men runs freely now on Brynbella hilltop and its parched bosom drinks greedily of the crimson flow. Broader grows the daylight, clearer the atmosphere, and straighter the shooting of the men whose head-gear we can alone discern silhouetted against the sky-line of their dominating kopje.

British pluck is being sorely tested by an altogether up-hill long-range battle, in which the trusty bayonet hangs idle by each soldier's side. We are at bay, but if unlike our forbears of England's ancient battle-line, no soldier's bosom bears a scarlet tunic, we are painting yonder hilltop crimson with the gore of the enemy--dyeing it that Imperial colour on which the sun never goes down. Yes, although we are in khaki, we are amidst wells of scarlet, for in the tawny face of morning, ruddy "blood-pools" reflect the rifles ghastly light. The 2nd West Yorks are, despite being the fuel of this Brynbella inferno, fighting tiger-like—every rifle hissing and spitting back defiance, save where it lies silent across its master's khaki-clad corpse. Through clouds of stone-dust, we are firing; for bullets whizzing like flocks of startled small birds keep up a metallic spluttering on boulder and rock. Yes, but despite the awful uphill nature of the conflict dead and wounded Boers are being continuously taken from where Lee-Metford rifles pour a limitless stream of lead. How every breast yearns for unshakled action. How every heart sighs

> "Oh! for one gleam of the trusty bayonet,
> Oh! for one charge up yonder hill."

Upholding the Honour of the Old 14th.

But we are cornered. Yet the men of the West Yorks are not fighting for their lives solely. No; to scamper over a few perches of adjacent ground would mean to reach a place of safety, but the honour of the

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old 14th is in our keeping—the spirits of the men sleeping in Inkerman and Sevastopol are hovering above us waving a tattered battle-flag in each soldier's face. We will "stick it," till every ammunition pouch is empty. We will "stick it"!

"Until every ball has told its tale,
And every round is spent."

The hill is now matted with the dead and wounded, comrades fast are falling in the fury of the fight. The bark of poor Benson's rifle ceases suddenly beside me. With spasmodic action he rises upright above his sparse head-cover, assumes a rigid position momentarily, falls over, and then from his lifeless fingers the rifle rolls down the hill. Away on my right front, a Lee-Metford too has ceased barking, and as comradeship in the noble profession of arms, draws my eyes magnetic-like towards the silent sod, I discern a khaki-clad figure with bloodless jaw-hung features and glazed staring eyes. Then a wind borne whisper tells me that gallant Thornton has handed in his gun.

With a rasping, ripping noise the rifles tear the atmosphere in frantic efforts to dislodge the enemy, 'neath whose moving crest of soft hats, Mauser fire-flames, stab out incessantly on the dawn-draped cone of yonder hill. Crash! crash!! go the volleys, and bang! bang!! the independent firing of our battle-line. Ever and anon the moans of the wounded float painfully to the ear through the din of sulphurous conflict.

Comrades Dropping One by One.

Amidst a group of maimed fighters matting the hillside a gallant fellow wriggles into a sitting position, his lost brain equilibrium swaying his dazed cranium to and fro. Electric-like a violent spasm seizes him, his hands shoot rigidly upwards to suddenly relax and drop lifeless across the dead form of a barrack-room comrade. A fresh bullet has found

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poor Rudd's already perforated breast, and in death, as in life, he is linked to Private Dickson, lying cold and stark beneath him.

In a rush to fill a voiceless "out of action" sangar you trip up over an unseen corpse, and as you sprawl above the pale face and open eyelids you discern Corporal Whitely dead in the war-garb of the West Yorks. As you reach the impromtu "embrazure" you are temporarily crowded out, for its threshold is formed by the dead bodies of Privates Smith and Tobin.

But this is war, ghastly war, and with a bound you are over, for the dead faces and fume-emitting guns bid you hurry on to action—bid you to man the scraggy rampart behind which a brace of Lee-Metford rifles and British soldiers lie wedded in death. In a moment your weapon is barking athwart the two lifeless forms linking once more with song of battle the broken firing line of the West Yorks. Its voice of war disturbs them not, for you are defending their battlefield sepulchre, consecrating it with the incense of valour, and keeping the torch of a soldier's glory blazing above a soldier's tomb. They are dead, they have played their part, yet, in the fury of the conflict when your rifle awakens the echoes of the tiny fort, you hear strange voices, and you turn round instinctively and address the rigid forms in khaki. But you get no reply from the bloodless lips of the jaw-hung faces bathed in the sulphurous incense of your rifle's tongue. Yet, what a trumpet-sounding picture the dun-wreaths paint as they entwine the pale brows of two Yorkshire lads lying dead in the heart of a South African Sangar. In the blaze of battle they met their doom, and while your belt pouch holds a Lee-Metford cartridge the blood-red mist of war shall plume the breach from which they have fallen. They remain with you to the end, for stretcher bearers dare not seek out the dead and wounded on Brynbella hilltop. They remain with you to the end lads so wont to fill the "canteen's"

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heart with rollocking song and Tommy Atkin's story. Yes, asleep in death beside their numbered guns, never more to be shouldered by them on the barren veldt, or across a homeland barrack square to the rousing roll of the bold Reveille.

In the sickly light of dawn clouds of powdered earth and white smoke define our firing line—clouds ever and anon thrown up by the earth-tearing bullets of Mauser and bursting of Maxim shells.

From every hill and glen the uncanny "pom pom, pom pom"—the death song of the Vicars' Maxim is incessantly tolling. In the white heat of conflict when the ground vibrates 'neath the rifles' crash the uncanny "pom pom, pom pom!" is uppermost. Then when the furious blast of arms dies away, "pom pom, pom pom" rolls mysteriously from where cuckoo-like the Maxim lies hidden in kopje and kloof. It leads the roar of conflict throughout the day, and at twilight the bivouac potting "sniper" fills its vacated pit of death amidst the grimy hilltops. As the smoke and dust-clouds roll lazily away the dead and wounded are almost continuously shrouded in the mire of the battlefield.

What a glorious picture, seen from afar, is now presented on the battered brow of Brynbella. What a noble profession that of arms—that of the artists painting yonder hilltop crimson—the descendants of the old warriors who with flint-lock and musket coloured half the world red. What daring painters these men in khaki. How coolly they trace a ribbon of light along their fighting line in the tawny dawn of morning, repainting it over and over as clouds of Maxim shell-smoke blind each rifles tongue.

Above all the din of war is roaring. Beneath all, lying on a background of blood, his crimson wellspring of valour, lies the heart-stilled form of Private Morgan —one of W. Company's gallant Lee-Metford manipulators. The dead battle-painters "easel" was formed by the rugged frame of yonder hill, and his "canvas"

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by the gory sod of its Boer-holding bosom. On the latter, he daringly painted his alloted part, and now, true to the glorious traditions of a soldier's art, his brush of war (rifle) lies choked in the blood of its master.

Fearless Lieut. Ross.

In a lull we scan the rows of stricken comrades. Among the latter we discern the martial form of Lieutenant Ross presenting, ere the prime of manhood had flushed his brow, the most glorious picture of the battlefield. He is only an embryo soldier, yet he wears in grimy face and gory breast the "decorations" of the grizzled men who on the field of Waterloo hurled back the old guard of Napoleon. No scarlet tunic enfolds his breast. No, but thoughts of the men who died in the 14th's bygone red bore him where he now lies wounded in the khaki of the West Yorkshires. Further afield twenty men of the rank and file roll and wriggle away from where the vicious "pom pom" tears up the ground in death-dealing fury. In their midst two-stripeless comrades, so long wont to glory in the fluttering colours and thundering drums of the "West Yorks" seek not shelter from the galling storm. For them the roar of battle is past. For them the colours of the "West Yorks" will never again stream above a breast of red, nor its drums dance to the thrilling notes of flute, fife and piccolo. Yes, the hearts of poor Newton and Gibbs are stilled in death, for their bodies form that human pivot around which roll and wriggle twenty wounded companions. Unceasingly the moans of the stricken men float now on every side. Sangar on sangar ceases to flash its battle torch, but ere its voice of war has died away a scatheless soldier fills the vacant "breach" and once more links the broken firing line.

The Bravest of the Brave.

On the crest of the hill fifteen fallen Yorkshire

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lads mark where dauntless Major Hobbs holds the blood-stained sod. Down the left slope across which the hero's shadow falls "out of action," soldiers lie in every sheltering nook and fold. Gallantly Major Hobb's directs and exhorts his men, his martial figure incessantly catching the eye as it fearlessly towers above bullet-splintered rock and soldier fronting boulder. He is proud of his modern khaki garb, yet prouder of the blazing red borne by his forbears of the old 14th up the heights of Alma and Inkerman. Their spirits, too, wave a tattered battle flag before his mental gaze, and to the beseeching lips of its battle-emblazoned face he rallies many a "broken square" on the Mauser and Maxim-raked cone of Brynbella. He has bivouaced on the sodden veldt with the rank and file. He has "stuck" the galling march with the rank and file, and now, in the midst of his devoted dead and wounded soldiers, he courts the fate that has befallen them. But he is not to "find" a warrior's sepulchre on Brynbella's hilltop. No, Major Hobb's shall sleep his last long sleep on the field of Honing Spruit.

The Tide of Battle Turns.

At last the roar of a Creusot lion breaks out in the dim distance—ringing in our ears like the "crack of doom" as, with bellowing mouth, it demands the evacuation of Brynbella. How soul-sinking, how galling the voice of the steel-jawed monster as like the king beast of the jungle it howls amidst the outer circle of hills. Yes, galling beyond measure, for just at the moment when, with increasing fortitude and limitless bravery, we felt as if riding on a wave of victory, our position is enfiladed by a tempest of death. The Boers have succeeded in mounting a steel-jawed monster on a far away outpost kopje commanding our right flank. With the advent of its man-disemboweling shell-fire all hope vanishes for no armour-girt infantry in the world could hold

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Brynbella against its bone-crushing fusilade. Our sun of battle is thus instantly overshadowed for we are practically attacked in a defenceless rear. What a sudden awakening. What a sinking of hearts as the order "Retire one man of each section at a time" runs down the firing line and its begrimed fighters stare at each other in blank amazement. At last our fighting part is played on the ill-fated hilltop, but on yonder still fuming kopje the crimson shading of our Lee-Metford painted battle-picture is cast by the mangled forms of bewhiskered Boers. All is over and we evacuate Brynbella, leaving behind 'neath a Red Cross Banner our dead and wounded. Leaving behind on its summit yet another British graveyard, linking Brynbella to the endless belt of "FAR FOREIGN FIELDS" in which sleep the men who died in the dazzling scarlet of England.

The Battle's Aftermath.

The midday sun is now blazing on the South African hills and in sullen silence two-battle-battered kopjes appear to be flaunting their heads in gore showing rivalry. The thirst of their parched bosoms has been slaked by the blood of Briton and Boer, and like the gore-soaked heads of bald vultures, brooding moodily in the sun, their blood-begrimed craniums show out glaringly. The shades of evening steal slowly over this sullen scene—the battle's aftermath in which British soldiers gaze dolefully at where men of the old 14th lie dead and dying on a South African hill.

In the sheltering folds of our day bivouac comrades are wedded to mother earth in spells of broken slumber. Yes, turning, twisting, grumbling and growling on the bedless field of war, constantly startled in dreams of the morning's fight by the Creusots roaring voice and sibilant bark of the Mauser. At last the shadows of the South African

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hills creep out across the barren veldt as old "Sol" disappears in a blaze of blood-red fury. Then the inky curtain of night robes the gory "catafalque" of war on which the dead and wounded of the old 14th are lying. The nocturnal hours drag slowly on broken, ever and anon, by the "ping pong, ping pong" of the Boer sniper. How the hillside echoes roll on the Mauser's midnight bark till every caverned gorge resounds with the dreaded articulation of the Burgher's "firing iron." At a dozen different points ghastly tongues of fire momentarily illumine the surrounding hills, kloofs, spruits and dongas. Then before our front-lines the echoes' voice rolls roaring across the night, whilst in our rear stealing faintly from out the sunken heart of a darksome kloof we hear "ping pong, ping pong" whispered by a Boer's Mauser. Yes, thus we lay all night beside our stricken men to whose battlefield biers rolled the snipers' doleful howling.

A Haunting Night Scene.

But in sleeping or waking we are mentally away where the white faces of our dead show out through a sea of midnight gloom—we are away where the ice-cold features of Yorkshire lads mottle Brynbella's gory breast, like lobes of polished marble. We are away where faint and feeble comrades link with grip of hand the friendship with which they fought side by side in the noble profession of arms. Aye, yes, we are away with the glorious dead whose souls soared heavenwards from the field of war, whose roll of worldly glory burst from England's martial drum, and whose grave of eternal glory links their memory to the men from whose commingled dust the green grass of Sevastopol and Inkerman is springing.

A Silent Morrow.

The dawn of the morrow looked down upon a silent voiceless Brynbella, no war din rolled across its barren

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crest, no rifle barked upon its blood-stained bosom. No, but flown hither from "FAR FOREIGN FIELDS" the warrior spirits of England's ancient dead fluttered noiselessly over. Yes, noiselessly over, fanning with pinions of love the heated brows of the wounded men, and brushing the clammy vapour of death from the stony cheeks of the lads who died in the West Yorks firing line. It was a sad yet glorious "MARCH PAST" when, with each head resting on a stretcher's hard pillow the wounded were borne to where the most glorious passports of war—the scars of the battlefield entitled them to the protection of the Red Cross Banner. Silently, we watched the gory procession move along towards the Red Cross tent. Silently, we watched the passing of each bandaged head and pallid cheek, till the last hero had disappeared into the blood-smeared Dressing Station.

Burial of the Dead.

Then—

"We paused as we wandered
When sadly we strayed,
Where the lads of the fourteenth
In cold death were laid."

As we espied the point of an ammunition boot or fold of a khaki uniform peeping above the rank grass we approached reverently to find wedded in death two barrack-room and battlefield companions—a British soldier and Lee-Metford rifle. Yes, reverently we gathered the "FALLEN FLOWERS OF THE FOREST," mown down by war's fell reaper in the bloom of martial life. We beat no muffled drum; we dipped no furled banner, as side by side we laid to sleep upon Byrnbella's breast

No. 5198, Lance Corporal Whitely, H Company.
" 5736, Private Benson, J "
" 2266, Drummer Russell, H "
" 2616, Private Dickson, H "
" 2587. Private Rudd, H "

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No.	3099, Private Gibbs, M	H Company
,,	2294, Private Newton, J	,,
,,	5729, Private Thornton, J	,,
,,	2435, Private Smith, J	,,
,,	2250, Private Morgan, W	,,
,,	5116, Private Tobin, S	,,

Out there far from England's Rose and Lily, far from Yorkshire town and moorland they sleep 'neath a mound of "long-haired grass," through which the night winds of the yellow veldt are for ever crying.

The Spirit of Drummer Russell appears upon the Ill-fated Hill.

Out there, on each midnight of the battle's anniversary, the muffled voice of a lone drum breaks upon the silent hill. Thrice it rolls, as if from out the bulging mound 'neath which Drummer Russell and the lads of the "West Yorks" are sleeping. Then the fluttering of angel's wings are heard, for with fifes in fleshless hands the spirits of the men whose music rallied many a Crimean square alight upon the kopje. Suddenly, the voice of a Lee-Metford rifle breaks across the cairn-marked mound, and to the command of its fiery tongue spectral fifers wearing the scarlet tunics of the old 14th form up before one lonely drum dangling from the risen form of Drummer Russell.

Then—

"By spectral hands a knell is rung,
By spectral lips a dirge is sung,
As on the mound that wraps their clay
The fifes and drum low music play.
Then o'er the hill the fifes play on
Before one lonely drummer man—
He of the Yorks who early fell
Upon Byrnbella's sunken dell.

Our Retirement and Capture of Gallant Major Hobbs.

Each man retired, crouching low, and rushing for all he was worth. Luckily, twenty yards behind the

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firing line, the ground dipped towards a wall over which you were safe, the lead showers of Creusot and Mauser beating against it harmlessly. In my rush for safety, and just before arriving at the initial depression I witnessed a scene of dazzling heroism. Yes, a scene of heroism, the outer portion of which was formed by bursting shells, and the inner by dauntless Major Hobbs shielding and succouring Private Peacock lying on the ground with almost both legs amputated.

Major Hobbs, gentlemanly as ever, and cool as an iceberg, said:—"Will you please give me a hand with this wounded man." Peacock was of my Company, and before the request was fully uttered I had leaped to the side of the wounded soldier. We both bore Peacock to the wall chased by bullets humming like bee-swarms above a sunbaked mountain. We dare not sling the mangled warrior over, and it was not of us to do so. With blood-laden hands I rushed bull-like at the fence, tore it down, and then passed him through the breach to safety.

Alone with Peacock.

Here I lay alone for some considerable time cheering and succouring a man who never whimpered, who never whined though his blood dyed red the arid hillside.

Major Hobbs, having seen Peacock safely through, returned to the firing line to continue his voluntary and extremely hazardous work assisting mangled men over the bullet-swept retiring zone. Looking through the breach in the wall I espied the Major's tall form moving stolidly on, facing unflinchingly the storm of death, from which the bravest of the brave were fleeing. Smaller and smaller shrinks the stately soldier's figure till at last he disappears in the vortex of lead from which the rank and file are hastily retreating. The receding current of martial life keeps pouring swiftly on, but it bears no Major Hobbs upon its bloody breast

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to safety. No, for he is back upon the bridge of the sinking ship, and has been captured in the act of "giving a hand" to the last wounded "sailor." Yes, and never again did we lay eyes on the fearless man who led us up Byrnbellas night-shrouded breast, and then refused to quit its shell-shattered cranium. He was sent a prisoner to Pretoria, eventually being liberated with Colonel Bullock and a party of Dublin "Do or Die Boys."

He Dies on the Field of Honing Spruit.

Once more he donned the sword of war, advanced to meet the Boers in open fight, fell amidst the battle's fuming heart on the field of Honing Spruit, and sleeps his last long sleep in the military cemetery at Kroonstad. A gentleman to his finger tips, a warrior from sword hilt to sword point, his heart was composed of fibre, whose battling throbs the Creusot's roar failed to curb when the privations of a galling war had turned the men of the West Yorks into ambling skeletons. If ever the Victoria Cross was worthily earned in the Relief of Ladysmith Major Hobbs deserved one in a twofold degree.

But hark back to Private Peacock, for at last I have secured the services of three men including my old "chum" Mick Hanlon, for the purpose of his further removal. A hasty council of war decided on bearing the wounded soldier hurriedly away, concluding foolishly that the Boers would injure the maimed if left behind on the field of battle. Accordingly we bore Peacock across the open slope in the direction of the Red Cross Banner. Of course the Boer gunners, unable to discern the merciful nature of our work, had no idea we were carrying a wounded man, for shot and shell reigned unceasingly around us.

Lieutenant Nicholson's Marvellous Escape.

On getting into the necessary slow stride of the ambulance corps, the little procession was headed by another "SECOND TO NONE" of the "West Yorks,"

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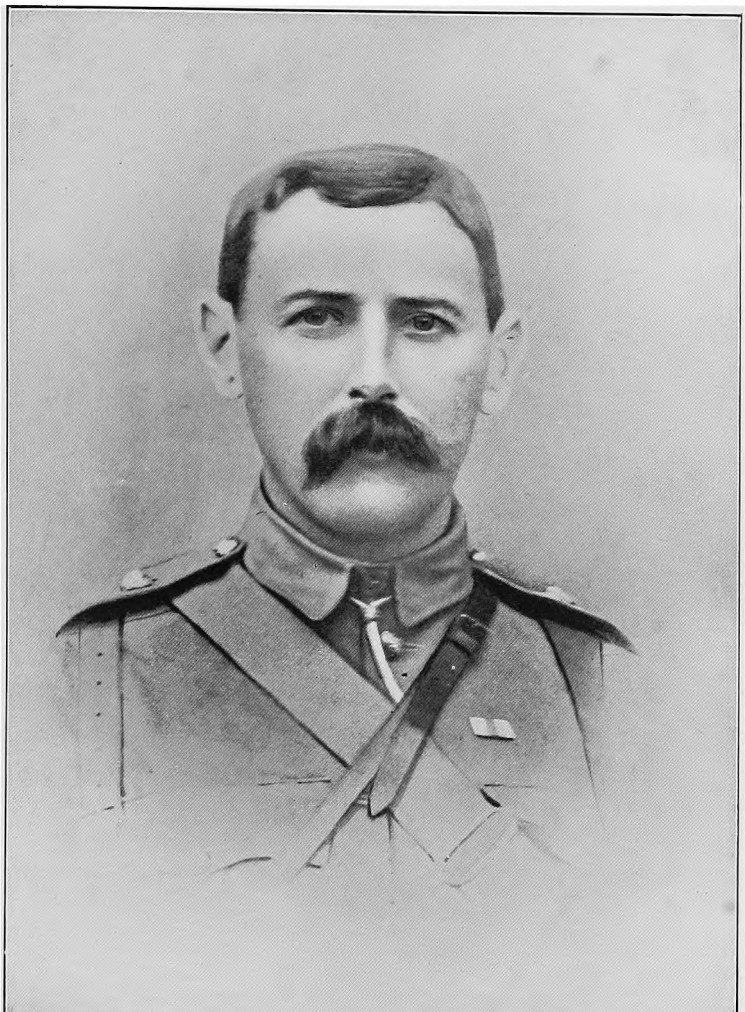
THE HERO OF BRYNBELLA.



MAJOR H. DE C. HOBBS.

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Lieutenant Nicholson, "D" Company. Away we ambled, Mauser side-drums (bullets) beating the time of our "funereal" march, till a Creusot big drum (monster shell) landed between Lieutenant Nicholson and the head of the little soldier-bearing party. Like a majestic eagle that had missed the intended quarry of its lightning swoop, it left behind a featherless (smokeless) wake, rebounding away like a solid shot—harmless. The force with which this chief grave-digger struck mother earth, created a "seismic" disturbance all round, the awful concussion throwing Lieutenant Nicholson down. During the underfoot vibration we all felt as if riding on a billowy sea, but no hair stood on end. No, for we had just been rendered bald by the flames of Brynbella's inferno. On rising, Lieutenant Nicholson smilingly ejaculated "I'll never be killed," the soldiers, dazed by his marvellous escape, remaining speechless though open-mouthed. Discerning a loose horse some distance away Lieutenant Nicholson, in order to move the wounded man more rapidly, ordered one of our men to commandeer it. Just as the latter got near a shell struck the animal in the side, on which the trooper seemed to dissolve in the smoke of the exploded missile. After the fumes of the latter had melted away, naught was to be seen save a mass of unstewed sausages, heaps of steaming horse-flesh. We were now quite exhausted, being foodless for twenty-four hours, and as poor Peacock suffered acutely from our rough ambulance arrangements we deposited him in a shady corner and reported same to the ARMY HOSPITAL CORPS.

General Remarks on the Engagement.

My first impression on coming under fire was a feeling of strangeness that men whom you had never bodily hurt should do their best to slay you and glory in their success. At the initiation of the fight we replied with the customary "section volleys" to the Boers' independent rifle work. Acting under the orthodox battlefield regulations, senior sergeants

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stood in rear uttering commands, and were supported by other non-commissioned officers walking about superintending elevation, &c. This theoretical routine ran smoothly while the opposing fire held high, but as the enemy's aim improved and showers of Boer "Manna" fell thick upon the hillside, Joubert's blessings were received with bent back and bowed head by the sergeants and other non-commissioned officers. One look at the latter's reverential pose recalled many a sacred homeland scene to me, for the crouching attitude of the non-coms duplicated to almost a craw-thumping extent the penitential posture of a Kerry family reciting the "Moonlighters' Rosary." I doubt much too but prayers were said. Anything more like the sackcloth piety of pilgrims assembled around Father John Power's tomb than that presented by the non-commissioned officers as on dropping from one knee to two, they kissed the ground in a "Lord have mercy on us" benediction I never yet witnessed. On looking rearwards to discover the whereabouts of the silent-tongued sergeants when the firing became hot, I espied one or two peeping from behind immense boulders. Yes, when the kneeling down attitude was of no avail, and an enemy using modern firearms had rung the death-knell of the Ready, Present, and Fire "hubbub," they disappeared to bury themselves and the blathering Volley behind the head-cover of the Lee-Metford manipulators. Our first lessons learned in the greatest of all Schools of MUSKETRY were the impossibility of firing "VOLLEYS" under modern conditions, the great difficulty of locating an enemy using smokeless powder, and the lunacy of remaining erect in the firing line. The words of command were the preliminary—"Volley firing, ready at the enemy in front, present, fire, &c."—orders automatically repeated, as if the sergeants were conjurers using dummy soldiers in a display of trick rifle-work on the hill. To carry out this practice non-commissioned officers standing in rear utter the words of command, noting the correctness of each man's sighting, and

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whether the volleys "went short or over" the object of attack. I have already described for you the tolling of the above system's death-knell, the "COME TO HEAVEN TOMMY" music of which blew the stentorian voiced sergeants out of the firing line, and the "Go to blazes Tommy" music of which rent Sandhurst's theoretical balloon asunder with a "Long Tom" shell. Apart from the impossibility of the volley in modern warfare, men get very cranky while waiting at the "PRESENT" for the command "FIRE," always believing that the lengthy period between both orders enables the enemy to enjoy a "Siesta" after "getting in" some bone-breaking shots. During this mute and exasperating interval soldiers are apt to curse, to get shaky, to get cranky, and "pull off." Yes, "let go" when the rifle is bobbing like the tender tail-stump of a freshly docked horse. The latter means, of course, blazing at the hole into which the rabbit has vanished. Yet volleys under certain conditions, such as firing from cover against Zulus, &c., are much more effective than independent trigger-pulling.

As an illustration of this Colour-Sergeant Legg, who was then "BATTALION SHOT," registered two hits with ten tries when firing over a 1,600 yards range at Sitapur. When he had finished eight third-class shots registered six hits with one volley. The latter banging for a full hour individually, would not probably equal the score of their combined discharge. Can you solve this musketry problem, dear reader? I can't, so "there I lave ye" as they say in Dublin when the cradle is being handed over the pawnshop counter till the next young Paddy comes marching home.

We felt much easier firing independently than under the strain waiting for the command, "Fire" in volleying rifle work. We were much handicapped in locating the position of the enemy for the Boers take cover in a manner never to be equalled by even England's lady yeomanry, Baden-Powell's boy scouts, or an Irish policeman waiting to pounce on lads whistling "The Peeler and the Goat." We sprayed

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every nook, crevice, donga, spruit, &c., on and surrounding the Boer position with lead as if from a watering can, rocks being splintered two miles in the kopjes rear. An old Dutchman informed us that whilst inspanning a mule team at this distance he got wounded in the leg.

Panicky Men and Night Attacks.

Men engaged in night attacks should be culled from the general rank and file in the most careful manner possible. Soldiers susceptible to "Nerves" should be completely eliminated, and none but those possessing cucumber-cool craniums employed. One nervous man will not alone make the success of the most carefully planned night attack doubtful but extremely dangerous. A cool, silent, party coming unexpectedly at nightime on an unprepared enemy will be awarded by the latter with a bottle of that soul-solacing beverage *i.e.*, "HAND UP." Contrast this with the reception accorded a force whose advance is punctuated by rifle fire, *i.e.*, "SHOT DOWN" and you will readily realise the necessity for adopting the above mode of selection. Yes, readily discern the necessity for relegating men with palpitating hearts to the sabbatarian atmosphere in which The Old Folk's At Home "voices the feelings" of Angel Sunday's musical box.

To select men for nightime exploits, the Officer commanding each company should take into his confidence the most discriminating of his subordinates, eliciting from them the names of the soldiers who though lion-hearted in broad-day strife become mere mice with an inky way ahead.

Our Artillery.

Just as the regiment re-formed near a farmhouse at the foot of Brynbella, the Battery came up too late to be of assistance. The guns, however, were formed up some little distance from the railway station of Willow Grange. From here they shelled the Boer position,

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but beyond demonstrating the English cannon's ineffectiveness when opposed to the Creusot (French field gun) nothing worth mentioning resulted from their fusilades. The Creusot poised on a hill the far side of Brynbella shelled our battery at a range far beyond the latter's effective reach. In the meantime the Boers were retiring with some dozen of our fellows, taken prisoners through having gone down Brynbella's obverse slope. The Imperial Light Horse and Natal Carbineers, under Colonel Marby, advancing from Estcourt expedited their retirement, and we reached camp without further fighting, having experienced one of the severest rifle-fires in the Relief of Ladysmith. Our casualities were comparatively light for the following reasons:—Everyone was in the firing line, there being no supports or reserves lying about in rear where killed and wounded at long range are often more numerous than in the actual firing zone. There were no exposed rushes from re-inforcing supports, as had there been, Brynbella Hill would have formed the battalion's burial ground.

Our guide, Mr. Chapman, was found dead on the following morning at the foot of Brynbella. We chatted with him after our duel with the East Surreys, and remarked on the inappropriateness of his dress as scout of a night expedition. He was wearing a white smock and slouch hat, and in that non-martial garb we found him dead—an exile who led England's soldiers faithfully towards Brynbella's gun-holding crest. His memory is preserved with a memorial in Escourt Church—placed there by the mindful lads amidst whom he died—the men of the 2nd West Yorkshires. General Joubert was present at the engagement, coming on the hill after our retirement.

Move to Frere.

Consequent to the Boers retreat to Colenso we moved to Frere, distance about ten miles. The whole force left Escourt at 8 a.m., reaching Frere twelve hours later after an extremely hot and trying

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march. The country from Estcourt to Frere is fairly level, with a few kopjes here and there on the right flank. Every inch of the way was thoroughly searched, but our scouts hadn't the craft of distinguishing things, the deciphering of which came readily to them later on, and consequently the whole march was punctuated with false alarms. Scouts galloped back reporting—"Enemy in sight." Infantry ordered to lie down, artillery galloped furiously to the front. Then the crestfallen cry—"No enemy in sight," rolled back childishly to our ears; the infantry getting up and resuming the advance in a hesitating and halting manner. This "pilgrim's progress" mode of progression repeated itself at short intervals during the route to Frere. Yes, every soldier believing the next kopje to be the exact "Holy Mound" from which Kruger's angels distributed their blessings, moved in the most reverential manner. Fresh arrivals grumbled and wondered at this delay, wanting to know what all the bobbing up and down meant, and why we could not go straight ahead at a hand gallop. Men of Talana and Willow Grange shook their heads ominously, and repeated the engine driver's saying:—"Chums, you'll be there time enough." A pious Mahommedan, watching our progress, advancing and lying down every hundred yards, would be easily pardoned for concluding that we were making a pilgrimage to, and had just arrived in sight of, Mecca. On arriving at Frere half battalions went on outpost, remainder of regiment pitching camp some distance from the railway station, and close to Howell's Farm.

The Awesome Night Watch of War.

On the following morning we commenced entrenching our new position. Brigades were held responsible for their own protection, and the General in command simply apportioned so much frontage to be held by each regiment in the circle of defence. At a distance of half a mile or so from, and right round the camp,

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positions were chosen for the outposts from 80 to 100 yards apart, and were immediately put in a state of defence with entrenchments, &c. The latter were occupied every night by the four companies on outpost.

By day the outpost duty was "found" by the cavalry reconnoitering in all directions some miles from camp, who, of course, as mounted men, could quickly get out of danger.

On the retirement of the latter towards nightfall the infantry manned the outpost trenches remaining on look-out until morning, when the cavalry again took up the running, going out to the front as before. Companies furnishing the outposts paraded in the "company lines" at nightfall; magazines were charged, and bayonets fixed, after which the men were marched to the outpost areas, each section being allotted a watcher's trench. A section at this time was from twenty-five to thirty strong, and four sections completed the Company. On each soldier taking up his post of nightly vigil, the camp-guarding sentinel watched with scowling visage, *i.e.*, frowning forehead, distended eyelids, and contracted lips. Then orders were issued, which no ears dare listen to save the lonely watchers into which they were sacredly lisped. When the last link of the camp's steel cordon was rivetted, the officer in charge of the Company whispered to the colour-sergeant the most closely veiled secret of the battle-field—the nightly counter-sign of the guard. Then, in turn, the latter whispered to each sentinel individually, the password, without which no stranger dare confront the man with steel-fanged gun. We had a fresh counter-sign every night, a new one being brought daily by an orderly from the Headquarter Office, and was, as a rule, the name of some big town—Leeds, York, Dublin, Cork, Johannesburg, &c.

The counter-sign would be utilised only by a courier bearing a pressing message, enabling him to get through the sentries without delay. After the outposts are mounted everyone feels as if the Riot Act was read, the Habeas Corpus Act suspended, and the curfew

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bell tolled. Yes indeed, a strange transformation takes place, when the voice of day is stilled, and tiger-like through kloof and donga, bivouac seeking Burghers are on the prowl. Then the eyes of the sentinels scan every height and hollow, peering intently at darksome shadows in which the wily Boer is wont to lurk. With head erect, and hand on trigger, their ears drink in the faintest war sounds borne campwards by the night-rolling breath of the veldt. Yes, then indeed, soldier's eyes are staring and ears are listening to catch the enemies' faintest step. No one, unless strictly on duty, approaches from the camp, and everything in the immediate vicinity outside, from an anthill to a mimosa bush, comes under grave suspicion.

On the Wrong Side of the Outpost.

If you have ever the misfortune to be on the wrong side of the outpost after dark and on foot, lie down and go to sleep until morning; lie down anyhow. Remember, a messenger coming through the outpost at night is mounted, and if you approached on foot you would most likely be taken for a unit in an attacking force, and bring a hornet's nest about your ears. Moreover, you wouldn't even have the doubtful consolation of knowing that you put them to the trouble of a coroner's inquest, though the unofficial verdict, *i.e.*, "What a fool, what a fool," proclaimed the finding of your corpse next morning.

Tommy on outpost, so far as having the disposal of life and death in his own hands, is an autocrat of the autocrats. No tyrant king of any time ever had his power; and, as someone said—Compared to him the Shah of Persia is not "in the halfpenny place." But Tommy is no vulgar tyrant, and with his sense of discipline, good nature, and loyal comradeship has often reprieved "a fool," whose scales of life were balanced by the trigger-finger of his manly hand.

The nervous strain on outpost duty in this campaign was certainly greater than in any previous civilised war. Opposed to any other white man you would hear his noisy advance, an echo probably of the workshop

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and the factory. If a German, you would hear the rattle of his sausage-can; a Frenchman, the croaking from his frog-bag; but a Boer being a silent, stalking hunter, the first intimation of his presence would probably be a blaze of rifle fire.

We had, occasionally, double sentries on each post who remained standing motionless behind the trench until relieved, the other off duty men sitting or lying down on the level ground in rear. The trenches were half moon-shape, and, of course, tents were not permissable on outpost work. What made the ordeal most irksome, no one was allowed to take his straps off during the hours of duty, from mounting until relieved next morning. If the night were wet and top coats worn, straps bound the rain-soaked torturing accoutrements to your groaning backbone and creaking ribs. You can imagine how comfortably we slept with immense pouches of ammunition buttressing our rawny buttocks on either side.

Medical men say you should sleep on the right side, but in our case there were seventy-five reasons, or rounds of ammunition, why we couldn't, and when we reversed the medical authorities' dictum, and turned on our left there were seventy-five other, or rounds of ammunition why we shouldn't.

Officers Shirk Nothing.

Officers slept on the ground behind the trenches with the men; and though they may possess camp beds in their tents there certainly were never any on the outposts. The Company Officer in the field is second to none in roughing it without a whimper, and would be the last man in the world to do anything that would give the least opening for "grousing" or cynicism. On settling down for the night each man detached the oil sheet from his belt and laid it on the ground for a mattress. Now, in winter on the low veldt at Frere there would be no great hardship in this with your coat for a pillow; but, unfortunately, it was summer, and the rainy season, and you

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often had to improvise another pillow; a helmet is a poor substitute, for it soon gets flattened out concertina fashion. However, a stone does not do so badly, and you must get something to keep your head out of the aqueous matter. Although an oil sheet wont let water through it can't prevent it getting over, and as it rains nearly every night in the wet season, and knows how to rain in this country, we were fairly saturated, at least on alternate nights. After a time those wettings began to find out the weak spots in our constitutions, and, remarkable fact, some apparently strong, athletic men were first to go—to hospital I mean—and others, apparently not so robust, seemed to thrive on the shower bath system. We did not use tents, as an enterprising enemy, lying only twelve miles away, may attack us any night, and most assuredly would, the first time we slept 'neath a canvas canopy. Tents form a splendid target and horrible death trap in a night attack when coming under a sudden close range fire from the magazine rifle. What with tumbling over ropes, and a feeling of helplessness at the thought of being caught napping, who would not get panic-stricken?

The Modern Rifle Explodes Napoleon's Dictum.

In judging of captures of large bodies by a numerically inferior force you must always take into consideration the power of the modern rifle. Say a party 1,000 strong allows an enemy half that number to come unexpectedly to close quarters, it is either surrender or annihilation with the larger force. People assert that this result would not form the sequel to a similar clashing of arms in bygone times; of course not. No oldtime party of soldiers would dare demand the capitulation of an outnumbering force when having nothing better than old muzzle-loading guns to punctuate their request. The demand for surrender under the above circumstances in bygone days would mean "clubbed guns" aloft by the major force, not "hands up," I assure you, supplemented by a melee in which "Providence" led

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the numerically superior and, of course, victorious party.

The quick-firing rifle of to-day would, under similar surprise conditions, "put" a leviathan force out of action without smoke, flame, bayonet or "clubbed" weapon having any bearing whatever on the transaction. Yes, indeed, it would be "hands up" or a dozen bullets in as many seconds through each unit of the major corps. Then the old thanksgiving hymn, "Onward, Christian Soldiers" would resound from where "Providence," contrary to Napoleon's dictum beat the big drum of the minor brigade.

Of course with men unable to shoot straight, such as the Japanese and Russians, the old pell-mell style of fighting must inevitably prevail, and then Old Bony's dictum reigns supreme once more, as towering on high "Providence" leads the numerically superior side to victory. If alive to-day and equipped with modern arms Napoleon would, when contending against command-driven human machines, *i.e.*, non-initiative, book-drilled soldiers, prove himself to be the one and only Bonaparte.

Napoleon v. Botha.

Pitted unit for unit against the thinking, perceptive, man-scenting, mobile Boer, whose rifle-range practice covers the hilltop, woodland and valley, his Eagles would be shattered inside six weeks without the latter's eyes alighting on the bullet-spitting rifles of the Pauls and the Piets. The soldier whose knowledge of musketry is acquired on the regulation range, stands but a poor chance when pitted against a foe, whose targets are formed of the hartebeest of the veldt, the doe deer of the glen, and the antlered buck of the Highland.

Bombastic Musketry.

You may as well try to ride a Derby winner to hounds without breaking your neck as manipulate a rifle effectively among hills when solely accustomed

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to the bull's eye of the ball alley, *i.e.*, the orthodox measured rifle range of a regular army. If you, lover of the fighting-man, fail to perceive anything in the above remarks worthy of being hung up in every English barrack-room, then you mobilize a crack corps of Bisley musketeers, take them out to the South African kopjes and set them at the rag and bob-tail Piets and Pauls who never yet set eyes on a regulation rifle range. "Blime me," as they say in Paradise, if you don't come back without your sharp-shooters. Take them out and pit them against the rank and file of any regular army, and you'll find Tommy Atkins there or thereabouts, I assure you. A frontal attack upon the Boers and a frontal attack upon, say, German soldiers (ex-dolls' eye makers), would bring forth results as different in nature as the climates of the tropical and polar zones. The consequences of the former would be a facsimile of those accruing from entering a tiger's cage, armed with a pop-gun. The latter would mean meeting an ordinary non-initiative sluggish enemy blade for blade, and gun for gun, under bugle-blowing, man-shouting stereotyped war conditions.

Nature Teaches the Poacher how to Shoot—Why not the Soldier?

Twenty-five per cent., so to say, of every soldier's time should be spent in the fields communing with nature, playing with nature, and wrestling in the mire, ploughboy-like with nature. The remaining portion occupied in ball-firing across a Government owned highland, lowland, woodland, and lakeland face of nature at semi-wild goats bred specially by Government for this purpose. The latter looks a very hairy suggestion. So indeed it is, for the nation adopting it would treat its enemies like Father O'Flynn did his rebellious parishioners—set fire to their tails and then make "Hares Of Them All."

If the soldiers who participated in the late campaign could hit a goat's "meggul" on a mountain top with

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the alacrity displayed in "getting" the bull's eye of the rifle range, so many Boer whiskers would not have gone unsinged. If Lord Haldane takes my tip he'll pin the above "Puckawn" paragraph to his military bonnet. On the latter it will reveal to lovers of Pipe Clay, and Red Tape, the knowledge acquired during the three years battle for Mr. Chamberlain's top-notch Feather. Had England's soldiers been trained, previous to the African war, on the lines above suggested, martial wisdom, other than that which made a hero of the man who, by running into Ladysmith, got General Buller and 30,000 men blown to pieces trying to dig him out again, would have existed. Don't trouble too much about the art of "chest cocking," persistent drilling, *i.e.*, gravel-rooting across the plumb face of a barrack square. Remember straight-backed men continuously "looking to the front" are apt to trip up when crossing a rugged country. A poacher is a very awkward man on a Dolly Gray promenade, but note, how smoothly he can negotiate the jolty bosom of a mountain. Shouting does not mean shooting, the bark of a cannon has nothing to do with the bite of its shell. The bawling of a Sergt.-Major may scare grey-eyed jackdaws off adjacent chimney-pots, but it wouldn't scare grey-haired Boers off South African kopje-tops, I assure you.

Tiny Thimble Rigger v. Ponderous Grenadier Guard.

Now, as to what constitutes the soldier of the wear and tear kind. The strongest of strong men would easily outshine all rivals when manipulating dumb-bells in the silken toggery of the circus tent. The spectators would certainly ejaculate, "Fifty thousand soldiers of his stamp would lick the world's fighting front with Paddy Ireland's blackthorn stick, and Donnybrook hullabulloo thrown in." Just look at his chiselled cheeks, balloon-like chest, and majestic mien as he toys with cannon balls and thunderbolts midst the glittering paraphernalia of the amphitheatre. He is both a giant slayer, and

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lady killer. Consequently Dolly Gray has sung him out to fight for England's Union Jack with the ponderous Grenadier Guards. Then let us fold our wings of martial flight and drop down on the barren veldt, to gauge how he has fared in rain-washed bivouac and bullet-swept battleline.

Yes, let us see if a few months on the blood-sapping field of war has shaped him like the big balloon which a pin-prick turned into a defunct "Leather" Bat. Good Heavens! there he is a shrivelled "bag-o-bones" making for the hospital tent with bearded chin, sunken eye and spindle shanks. Yes, dear reader, the thorn of war has pricked the human balloon, for the dark-garbed Minister of War, "Hunger," has wedded the front walls of the strong man's abdominal cavity to his spinal column. Yes, and the marrowless contents of the collapsed human skin would be scarcely acceptable to "Jack the Bone Man."

The Royal Dublin Fusiliers.

Contrast this scene with that on yonder hill where, bayonets flashing like blue-backed kingfishers o'er a mud-coloured stream (khaki-clad line of men), point the victorious way, not of majestic Grenadiers, but diminutive reserve men, *i.e.*, Irish thimble-riggers. You hear no wild huzzah now from where the latters' bayonets flash above the kopjes' crest and disappear with blood-flecked sheen down its "obverse" shoulder. No; for the tiny card-sharpers, the Dublin Ash Street boys, have not the lungs to shout, but before their onward rushing "Fusilier Stream" gleam the blue king-fishers of war, the gore-mottled bayonets of the Do-or-Die Boys. You see they, like Tennyson's brook, keep rushing on for ever, majestic hearts propelling them resistlessly over kopje and kloof, while tiny mouths enable them to subsist for a month on a second-hand chew of tobacco.

Look where you will and the kingfishers of the Dublin Fusiliers are for ever flashing o'er that mud-brown stream, streaked here and there with the gore

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of Ash Street, Meath Street, and the Coombe Scallywags. They are "weeny" men, but their hearts of oak bear in letters of gold the majestic title "Royal." It would require a roll of Gallagher's twist and a round of heifer beef weekly to keep the "strong man" alluded to in chatty form let alone fighting order out on the foodless and bedless veldt of Africa.

Life Sapping Work.

Just partake slightly of what he went through; masticate the ingredients thoroughly, for unless your stomach is of the ostrich type—well, the matter will remain in your abdominal cavity deeply entrenched. Among other vagaries of the weather he experienced ten consecutive nights and nine consecutive days of torrential downpour. Then, when swollen rivers had "rounded" up all food convoys, his rations fell, his temperature rose, his stomach sank, his eyes grew hollow, and the seat of his breeches looked melancholy. Yes, indeed, as he marched day after day, on "mealies" cut by himself in the fields, strange aspects replaced the normal features of his anatomy. Of course, the sourest pill of all—the bitterest prescription ever prepared for man by the chemist of war—is the heart-galling, blood-scouring labour of marching. Just fancy plodding along day after day with an undigested mealy skin lingering in your stomach in hope that your heart may fall down and warm it. Aye, yes, and the good old West Yorks compassed 34·32, and 33 miles a day for three consecutive days the very week in which the great campaign ended. That was a brilliant burst, "oldhands," with which we finished the two and a-half years' man-hunt in South Africa. Brilliant in the extreme, for we swung light-heartedly past the graves of mighty athletes, whose full-blown flower of life had crumbled before the withering blast of the battlefield. But hark back to the hardships of the "strong man," and the terrible marching, the mighty thorn of war which turned him into a human "Leather Bat."

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Napoleon contended that an army marched upon its belly, *i.e.*, its commissariat. The opposite was the case in the late Boer war, for no force ever marched as fast and as far on a full belly as the British did on an empty one in South Africa. Yes, and no campaign ever revealed more glaringly the futility, as a soldier, of the "strong man" with the democratic appetite and genteel constitution. Consider what the soldiers had to go through marching day after day, rain streaming down their necks, water pumping out of their boots, and lying at night in a slimy pool, with a stone keeping their heads above the fever-breeding liquid. Just picture hordes of ragged, war-worn men lying prone at "peep-o-day" on the miry ground, with the cold grey eyes of dawn peering intently at their hollow-eyed features. Yes, dear reader, ask the "coal heaver," the navvy, the farm hand, &c., who went through the campaign:—"What formed the most gruelling work he ever indulged in," and he will rank marching first compared to which all other tasks meant cradle-rocking. Ask him what is the best qualification for a soldier—manipulating developers, gripping dumb-bells, &c.—and he will ejaculate with brain-racking blast of tongue:—"Manipulating developers, gripping dumb-bells, &c., be damned. The best qualification for a soldier is a "wire-haired constitution."

A Soldier sleeps with the right eye open and the left ear cocked.

On outpost duty good hearing is indispensable, and in this respect a greater disparity exists between people than could possibly be noticed in ordinary life. After the first few nights' outpost "work" had revealed the hearing characteristics of the men, it was usual for a reposing off-duty soldier to ask:—"Who is on sentry." After the answer, *i.e.*, "Deaf Burke and Sleepy Willie" had struck his ear, the sighing prayer, "Oh Lord, oh Lord, no sleep, no sleep, floated skywards as he assumed a sitting position and an ear-pricked pose of the head. Another night the same

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query emanates from the lips of a recumbent "off-guard" soldier, and as the joyful answer—"Peeping Tom and Listening Jemmie" catches his ear, a muttered "thank God" voices his feelings as he turns over and snores.

After a little experience we adopted an unwritten law, that the men with keenest ears and clearest optics should "mount guard" during the most critical nocturnal period—the inky hours preceding dawn.

Hordes of bewhiskered Boers—the flower of Kruger's back-country fighters—prowled about during this coal-black period, crawling leopard-like through the darksome spruits, dongas, and pathless hills. During these death-warrant filling moments each soldier slept like an Irish terrier, with the left eye open and the right ear cocked. This unwritten law we religiously adhered to during the campaign. In the event of an attack the half-battalion in camp would come up on the right and left of the outpost trenches, filling in the vacant spaces, thus giving the defence an unbroken front.

The Battle of Bothwell, Lake Chrissie.

We continued this orthodox—interval between sentinel's—style of outpost until the morning of the 6th of February, 1901, when, by a hitherto undreamt of ruse, the Boers made its continuation impracticable. Approaching this date, seven columns, under the supreme command of General French, were formed in a wide circle round General Botha's commando with a view to capturing him. As one of the columns in the circle, consisting of the Suffolk Regiment, West Yorks, Cameron Highlanders, 5th Lancers, 2nd Imperial Light Horse, under Colonel Mackenzie, 4th Mounted Infantry and thirteen guns. We left Wonderfontein on the 3rd of February, 1901, and on the night of the 5th, while camped at a place called Bothwell, near Lake Chrissie, our Sandhurst defensive plan was, by an unprecedented piece of

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strategy, completely upset. Yes, shattered by an exploit, the design of which could, alone, emanate from Slim Piet's brain, and the stealthy nature, dash and daring of which has no parallel in warfare's history.

The Black Watch of Midnight.

When twilight had faded away, the curtain of night, dropping from a starless dome, shrouded our Bothwell bivouac in jet black drapery. Nocturnal silence reigned supreme, sentries moved not gun or foot, for within a glistening cordon of English steel, men from Yorkshire towns and moors lay battle-stained and war-worn. All around, sentinels of the night watch stood by their steel-tipped guns, erect, ear-pricked, watchful and motionless. The softly-cooing night-wind bore not the faintest whimper of strife across the lone-karoo; yet, martial nostrils scented the incense of war, and the index-finger of each sentry's right hand lay ready for instant trigger-pulling. Nothing moved within the steel-girt zone of rest, not even the neigh of a war horse broke the bivouac's ghostly silence. Troubled dreams disturbed not the soldier's battle-field repose. No, for the heart-bleaching breath of war kissed the brows of men beside whose hawk-like eyes gleamed the camp-guarding bayonet. Overpowered by the galling march and "camp-fatigues" of a long, drawn-out campaign, the men were quickly glued to mother earth by slumber. Yes, clasped in the arms of "Morpheus," secure in the belief that comrades who would prove faithful unto death held watch and ward o'er Bothwell.

Parental Souls dream of far off Bothwell.

Different indeed was the repose of parental souls, sleeping where relics sacred to the memory of men lying on Bothwell's breast, adorned the humble cots of Yorkshire town and moorland. There a wild "SHEEGEEAH" swept across the lonely moors on

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which nestled, behind hoary mound and crag, the homes of English "Red Coats." To the FAIRIES NIGHT WIND, the absent warriors fighting cock crew incessantly upon its doorside perch, and athwart the old garden seat his coursing hound keened mournfully. Then it was, that parents aroused from battle-viewing dreams, heard a death-rattle by the back yard door, and prayers were offered for warrior souls sleeping on Africa's sodden veldt beside a Lee-Metford rifle. Yes, a ghostly stillness reigned above and around our zone of rest, for naught came across the steel-ringed camp save the rhythmic swell of the sleeper's breathing. Deeper and deeper grew the veil of night, till its inky hood hung like the pall of death o'er the soldier-bearing breast of Bothwell. Out through the night-shroud's fathomless gloom, alert to catch the enemies faintest tread, sentries eyes were watching and sentries ears were listening. All seemed safe and peaceful round our camp of war. Yet, though nothing was left "to chance," nature played the soldiers a bitter part ere the dawn of day broke over Lake Chrissie. Yes, the lone veldt's mist-fiend spun a clammy shroud 'neath which Yorkshire lads were done to death on the tentless heart of Bothwell.

The Fog Shroud of Slaughter—The Boers' Desperate Horse Stampeding Ruse.

Long before midnight the low veldt commenced exuding its grey vapour of death, till lakes of filmy mist concentrated in one vast mass on the low-land's sentinelled by our kopje. Here it lay, till that fell-reaper Death, had woven the thin grey meshes of a mist into a blinding fog-shroud. Then the "Fog Fiend" released his human net and that grimy-hood slowly ascended the dingy sides of Bothwell. Cresting one vast sea of haze, billowy banks of the grey-blue fiend sought out the West Yorks' lines, and while the latter were engulfed in the blinding veil, a band

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of Boers stole in between the sentries. Not even a suspicious looking shadow loomed through the passing mire, and everyone expected a continuation of slumber and peace when the fog-shroud had rolled past the bivouacs steel cordon. Not even the crackling of a stepped-on stem was heard to betray the enemy's presence. No, for a deep hush of silence formed part of the fog-shroud's suffocating wake, as if the camp's heart were stilled by the fumes of its clammy bosom.

Echoes Roll Back the Neighs of Frenzied Horses Across the Inky Night.

No, nothing moved, nothing stirred, till a wild neighing of steeds and a wilder rumbling of hoofs proclaimed to the suddenly aroused camp that two hundred cavalry horses had been cunningly stampeded. With headlong charge they tore the fog-shroud open, till the ground shuddered to the impact of iron girt hoofs, and every echo whinnied as the neighing mob of frenzied equines swept past caverned kloof and kopje. From their wake, rolling back through the inky heart of night came the thundering swell of galloping feet, and, breaking faintly through the voluminous sound, floated strangely weird snorts and "horse-calls." Fainter and fainter grew the latter till naught save tiny bell-like neighs came across the veldt, as the rumbling of the stampeded troopers' hoofs melted away amidst the distant hilltops. When the fog-shroud had rolled past the bivouac no trace of the enemy could be seen, for muffled in the folds of its greasy heart he, too, had vanished. Yes, the horses had been cut loose and then startled—the initial movement of a camp-capturing plan—the successful consummation of which was, however, frustrated by Yorkshire bayonets.

Matchless Boer Strategy.

The final movement of this daring scheme to capture the whole camp was yet to take shape—a shape far more deceptive and sombre-garbed than the fog-

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shroud under whose grey hood the Boers had unleashed the horses. It came at 2.50 a.m., when the clank of equine hoofs, sounding as if emanating from a sauntering gait, rolled to the sentries' ears like bars of homeland music. Yes, for the equines' leisurely pace signalled that the home-seeking instinct of cooled-down, guideless horses was once again asserting itself, and that the stampeded troopers were returning in a body to their battlefield "Mews." On they came with the proverbial gait of straying horses now sauntering nonchalantly, as if returning from the watering pool, now hesitating in a fearsome manner, and again crowding each other excitedly onward towards the camp. Closer and closer grew the riderless and, apparently, timid troopers till, cowering-like in a wedge or angle-shaped body, they passed through the West sentries—the latter glad to have the stampeded horses back. A happy ending, you will say, to what had been, a few hours previously, a maddening, camp-arousing stampede.

A Bolt from the Blue.

But, alas! Boer strategy, not equine instinct, was to assert itself, for no sooner had the wedge of riderless horses passed through the unsuspecting outposts than, like a bolt from the blue, out of the equine angle sprang a crowd of sharp-shooting Boers. Then the inky night was turned into day by Mauser fire, and to each rifle's sulphurous bark the echoes of Lake Chrissie rang out the death-knell of many a Yorkshire soldier. Once clear of the equine screen the Boers turned towards the West Yorks' outposts and wiped them out almost to a man. Then, facing the main position, volley on volley was poured into its heart, but the Boer fire which had turned the night bivouac of Bothwell into day revealed the British bayonet at bloody work. To blaze at the enemy would mean

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the killing of our own men, for now the bivouac was a jumbled mass of barking guns, frenzied beings and flashing bayonets. In one moment the hill seemed turned into a full-blast volcano, the outer jaw of whose crater was formed by the fire-spitting Mauser and the inner by the British rifles bosom-piercing fangs. It was awful to witness the steel tipped Lee-Metford darting snake-like towards those be-whiskered faces before whom the deadly Mausers barked.

The Death of Lieut. Cantor.

Yes, the midnight battle is now raging at white-heat, and amidst the frenzied encounters of Boer and Briton gallant Lieut. Cantor leads the West Yorks battle's van. A cry from a wounded private rings out beside him, at which he turns round momentarily and calls for a volunteer to remove the helpless soldier. Then the fearless subaltern plunges into a leaden vortex, and, in a blaze of glory, his spirit soars away to where, in spectral fight, he leads the lads who fell on Bothwell, past the bemedalled figure of England's Iron Duke. Yes, and ere his bullet-riddled body has touched mother earth; his call on behalf of a wounded private is nobly answered by a three-striped hero of the old 14th. Heedless of that man-swallowing vortex into which Lieut. Cantor has vanished, heedless of all save the safety of an humble soldier, Sergt. Traynor answers that call to duty—that call to succour a stricken private—the last command uttered by fearless Cantor upon this earth.

Matchless Heroism.

Look, look how gallant Traynor rushes towards the blazing "furnace" into which Lieut. Cantor has vanished, and beside which a stricken soldier lies

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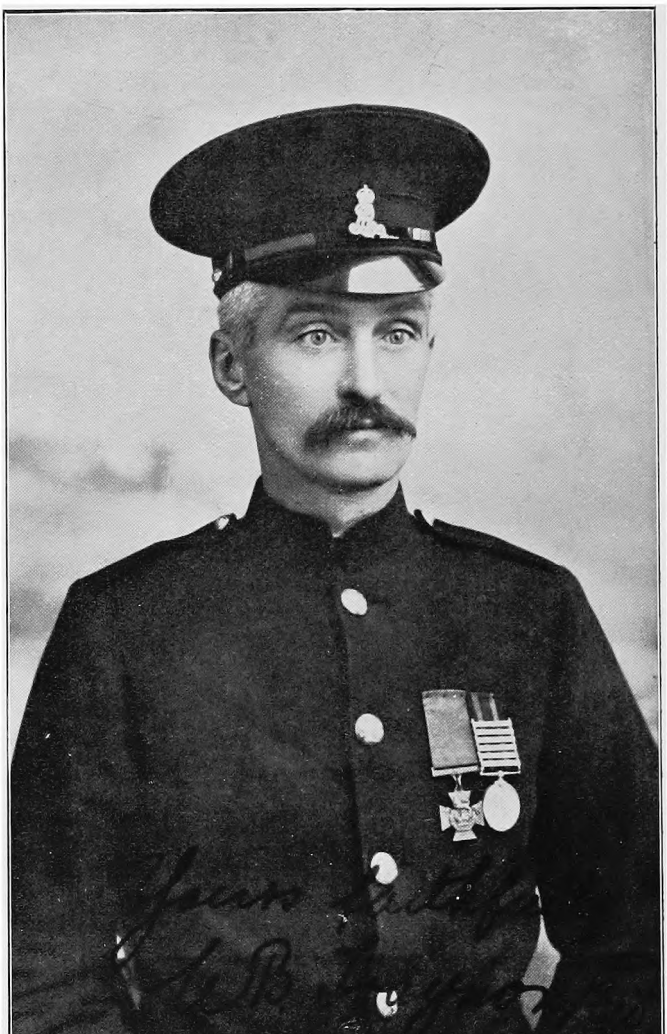
THE HERO OF BOTHWELL.



SERGT. W. B. TRAYNOR, V.C.

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bleeding to death. In a moment Traynor has clasped the fallen comrade to his bosom, but the war-worn and now wounded Sergeant staggers and falters as he bears his bleeding burden bravely away. Around him the Mausers are hissing and snapping with wolfish anger and lurid tongue. Ever and anon the thud and ring of British steel is heard beside him as bayonets become embedded in bandolier girt hearts. At last the gallant Traynor is beaten, being too feeble to bear the helpless comrade away. Yet he will not stain the noble profession of arms, he will not sever that link of heroism which binds a wounded sergeant to a stripeless comrade, lying helpless on the field of war. No, for he, now, in turn appeals for help to consummate the noble mission entrusted to him by Lieut. Cantor ere the latter had passed gloriously away. With a bound Lance Corporal Lintott is beside his gallant sergeant, and through lanes of blood flowing from heart-stilled comrades they bear the wounded soldier to the shelter of a British trench. A Victoria Cross on Sergeant Traynor's bosom commemorates this act of Bothwell heroism, whilst a "Distinguished Conduct" medal on Lance-Corporal Lintott's tunic recalls his valorous work on the kopje's bloody breast. The enemies' flame-crested battlelines are now growing faint upon the hillside, as before our back-beating bayonets the lurid tongues of Mauser fury recede slowly away. Yes, flickering here and there, in isolated encounters and blazing forth with all the ghastly glare of mortal combat, where Boer and Briton rally round comrades whose dying volleys still reverberate through the darksome glens.

Wherever the Boer rifle fire rings out the bayonets of the West Yorks gleam like the blood-laden fangs of the sleuthhound hanging on the flanks of its prey. Yes, grimly the steel-tipped Lee-Metford plays its avenging part, never ceasing to flash in deadly thrust till men in khaki stand triumphant on Both-

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well's gory heart. We beat them off and held the camp intact, thus redeeming a desperate situation. A situation brought about, not by lack of alertness on our sentries' part, but chiefly due to the cunning of men whose martial art has changed the military tactics of all nations.

A Ghastly Break-of-Day Scene.

The field of Bothwell had thus been fought and held, and now, as the shroud of night was slowly melting away, with its disappearance the pallid face of dawn would look down upon the battle's ghastly aftermath. Suddenly a grey slit of light reveals a rent in the far-away horizon. Gradually it grows into a gaping wound rolling up, slowly but surely, the dusky curtain of night, till the leaden eyes of a South African morn looks down on the cold steel of our guns, and the colder faces of the men who died in defence of Bothwell. Here, 'neath the steely gaze of dawn, we stand to arms, human fighters, holding with British bayonet the sod which, in turn, the bearded Boer had wrestled from the dusky Kaffir Chief and the black-maned king of the jungle.

The landscape, like the sullen dawn, seems draped in ashen mourning. Nature has failed to clothe with herbage the African hill, on whose parched bosom lie our gory dead, and across whose parched bosom floats the low moaning of our dying. Not a word is spoken, not a murmer lisped, as we watch the sickly face of dawn peering over the surrounding hills; watch it trembling on their grim and hoary crests, as if fearful of allowing the eye of day to look down on the gory breast of Bothwell. This silent, haunting scene is the awful calm left behind by the battlefield's awful hurricane. Yes, the lull in the storm, the ghastly legacy of war, a "dawn-of-day" battlefield picture on a South African hill, in which khaki-clad men from Yorkshire moors guard the lifeless forms of gallant comrades.

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Burying the Dead and Succouring the Wounded.

But roll-call at last breaks the silence of the bloody scene, and then through the badly-stricken but victorious ranks the solemn-faced stretcher-bearers go corpse hunting One glance at the rigid, gore-soaked figures, passed beyond all aid, and they hurry further afield—called thither by the wail-laden wind to where wounded men are lying. With uncovered features the maimed warriors are tenderly borne in, some strangely silent and calm, the certain precursor of impending dissolution. Others, less steeped in gore, exchanging "quip and joke" with unscathed canteen comrades. On the edge of the battlefield facing the foe we found Lieut. Cantor stark and cold—his couch of death the ground rooted up by the battle's vortex. With a plunge he had disappeared from our ken into the latter's bullet-spitting heart; and of the lead-laden clay which its tongues of fire had left behind we made him a sepulchre. Yes,

> "We dug him a grave on Bothwell's breast,
> Not in sheet nor in shroud we wound him;
> But we laid him there in khaki dressed
> 'Neath the sod on which we found him."

One by one the wounded rank and file were brought in as follows:—

Col. Sergt. Lyons
" " Busher
" " Woodhouse, F Co.
" " Traynor, W Co.
" " Warrick, W Co.
" " Farrar, B Co.
Lance-Corporal Bell, J Co.
Private Treen, W Co.
" Cotter, T Co.
" Clarke, J Co.
" Clarke, T Co.
" Wright, W Co.
" Levington, J Co.
" Cox, J Co.
Private Smith, J Co.
" Holland, F Co.
" Hayes, J Co.
" Selby, A Co.
" Walker, F Co.
" Garnet, A Co.
" Snowden, F Co.
" Bourne, W Co.
" Devine, J Co.
" Marshall, T Co.
" Smith, J Co.
" Amos, B Co.
" Lawrence, E Co.

At last the mangled Yorkshire men who still drew

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the breath of life had passed on to where the Red Cross banner drooped above an isolated tent, the glorious passport to which was writ in the gore of each soldier. Then the silent procession of rigid, face-covered bodies commenced—the final March Past of the lads whose hearts were bleached of blood for ever. With closely-draped features the cold and stark forms were borne slowly away. Not, however, towards the canvas canopy o'er which flew the Red Cross flag, but on to where a yawning pit lay ready to receive "The Fallen Flowers of the Forest." Into it, side by side, we tenderly laid—

Sergt. Greensmith
Corporal Taylor, H Co.
Private Walker, R Co.
" Knight, B Co.
" Deglow, E Co.
" Crossley, A Co.
" Lindley, J Co.
" Sear, F. Co.
" Snead, J Co.
Private Clarken, H Co.
" Head, W Co.
" Myers, J Co.
" Stokes, H Co.
" Dysom, J Co.
" Middleton, A Co
" Hurton, J Co.
" Hawkesley, H Co
" Onslow, J Co.

No "last post" rang out upon the gory hill, no farewell volley above the stark figures in khaki. We laid them there, barrack room comrades, who were wont to make the canteen of the West Yorks ring with rollicking song. Barrack room comrades who died side by side wielding the bayonets of the Prince of Wales's Own Regiment. Yes, comrades who, faithful unto death, sleep side by side in a battlefield grave athwart which they played their part and performed their duty.

Remarks on the Conflict.

Our casualties would give no idea of the din of flying bullets, the erratic night firing on both sides forming a net-work canopy of lead. Throughout the darksome combat bayonets plied by Yorkshire Tommies flashed everywhere, consummating with unflinching bravery the tasks allotted to the steel-fanged jaws of war.

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Prisoner's taken, told us they expected to create a panic, and by so doing capture the whole camp. This operation they would have assuredly accomplished, had not our baptismal fire on the banks of the Tugela developed cucumber-cool craniums and elephantine skins. There were no showers of confetti I assure you on the banks of the Tugela, and very little of it, too, fell in Bothwell Camp. No, the blessings bestowed on Tommy Atkins in both places duplicated the lava-bearing benedictions poured over the ramparts of "hades" by horn-headed old Nick. Now, with reference to Bothwell, we know well what the artist who, during the late war, sipped his bovril before an English fireside would ejaculate, if allusion were made in his presence to the Boer horse-stampeding ruse. Well, we may have become a wee bit fossilised by the bang and bark of battle previous to arriving at Lake Chrissie, yet, we had men on outpost duty as keen as ever stood beside a British bayonet, or silently manipulated the breach bolt of a sentry's gun. My answer to the infallible bovril-sipper and tabloid-taker who scoffs at the uncouth and horny-handed peasant, is, that farmer Botha wrought more solid history in one hour than all the modern Shakespeares and Michael Angelos could if their lives extended through centuries of bombastic enlightenment—*i.e.*, theoretical tomfoolery.

Yes, dear reader, the only General ever pitted in war against an army of "Deadwoods" "has handed in his gun"—fearless General Buller. What he failed to do with the troops at his command, don't tell me Mr. Microbe-Chaser that Wellington or Napoleon could accomplish. Golden epaulets were worn with impunity at Waterloo; the glimmer of a polished button in South Africa represented a Bull's-eye upon the breast of its wearer. Napoleon rode a white horse in all his campaigns. He would not ride a black mule with a white tail five minutes in South Africa.

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Were he to do so he'd never dismount—no, he'd fall off like a dropped sack, to fill a sepulchre into which the hybrid's bullet attracting, lily-coloured steering appendage had consigned him. After this night's experience hence-forward, every man in the regiment when not on outpost duty, lay down in skirmishing line between the pickets with rifle and straps beside him, and over this human barrier Slim Piet never stole. The following order was issued the same evening by Major-General Smith-Dorrien :—

"The G. O. C. compliments most highly the steadfastness of all Infantry Battalions during the heavy attack last night. The conduct of the West Yorkshires, on whom the brunt of the battle fell, was especially fine, and their heavy losses are deplored. The casualties were very heavy owing to the Boers getting through, two pickets having followed up a mob of two hundred stampeded cavalry horses. These two pickets were practically wiped out." The following was published in orders on 27th of October :—

The King has been graciously pleased to signify his intention to confer the decoration of the Victoria Cross on the undernamed N. C. O., whose claims have been submitted for his Majesty's approval for his conspicuous bravery in South Africa, as stated opposite his name, 2nd Battalion West Yorkshire Regiment, Sergeant W. B. Traynor, during the night attack on Bothwell Camp on 6th February, 1901, jumped out of a trench, and ran out under an extremely heavy fire to the assistance of a wounded man. While running out he was severely wounded, and being unable to carry the man by himself he called for assistance. Lance-Corporal Lintott at once came to him, and between them they carried the wounded soldier into shelter. After this, though severely wounded, Sergeant Traynor remained in command of his own section, and was most cheerful in encouraging his men until the attack failed." His

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Majesty has been further pleased to approve of the grant of his medal for Distinguished Conduct in the field to the undermentioned soldier in recognition of his gallant conduct during the recent operations in South Africa:—"No. 2983, Corporal W. F. Lintott, 2nd West Yorks Regiment." *Vide London Gazette*, Tuesday, September 17th, 1901.

In Memorian.

One word more ere we bid adieu to Lake Chrissie and the warrior souls who fell upon its adjacent hill. Out from Yorkshire towns and moors on each night of the battle's anniversary "Tradition" soars on the wings of martial love to mourn by that great grave on Bothwell. Yes, and as the orders of war forbade the bugles and guns of the old 14th to roll a "Last Post" and fire a farewell volley over the lone tombs closing, "Tradition," takes with it to wail o'er Bothwell's dead the drums and fifes of the West Yorkshires. With tearful eyes and moorside wreath in hand, it follows the long brown column of khaki-clad men silently plodding its way o'er the barren veldt towards the lakeside bivouac. With spectral ears it hears low-voiced commands rolling above the "sough, sough" of dragging feet, and when hordes of weary warriors halt upon Bothwell's breast, "Tradition" hears the death-rattle of war, the metallic clanking of "grounding arms." Then, when fairy twilight closes round the veldt bivouac, "Tradition" hovers over the tentless field, *i.e.*, hovers above the begrimed forms of Yorkshire lads stretched out in martial great coats. Mournfully it watches the sickly fog engulf the camp in a clammy cloud. Mournfully it watches lynx-eyed Boers sneak through the befogged pickets. Then, a weird rumbling sound rolls through the inky night, as, with headlong rush, stampeding horses tear the fog-shroud open. Sad, now, grows the heart of the wreath-bear-

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ing angel, to sink deeper in woe ere the dawn of day steals o'er Lake Chrissie's soldier bearing kopje. Once again the clanking of horses hoofs breaks through the gloom of night; and then, spirits flown hither from Yorkshire homes cross and re-cross in warning flight, the path of the camp-returning, death-bearing horses.

Onward they come till the spectral mob of riderless troopers saunter leisurely into the bivouac, past the fog-shrouded forms of spectral outposts. Then "Tradition" hears Lake Chrissie's echoes roll out the death-song of war as bewhiskered Boers, leaping from 'neath equine flanks, meet in elphin fight the lads who died in defence of Bothwell. Back, receding step by step along the kopjes darksome heart, the Mauser fire-flames go, each signal of defeat revealing the glittering point of the Boer-beating bayonet. At last the spectral fight is o'er, and, stooping above that mound on Bothwell's breast, "Tradition" wreaths with Yorkshire flowers its lonely CAIRN. Then, from out the inky heart of night, rising and falling, soughing and sobbing, a wail for the dead, the muffled roll of drums floats over the field of Bothwell. As the drum-sobs die away elphin-lutes, *i.e.*, the fifes of the old 14th pipe—

Oft in the stilly night,
Ere slumber's chain has bound me,
Fond memory brings the light
Of other days around me;
The smiles, tears,
Of boyhood's years,
The words of love then spoken,
The eyes that shone
Now dimmed and gone,
The cheerful hearts now broken!
Thus in the stilly night
Ere slumber's chain has bound me,
Sad memory brings the light
Of other days around me.

When the brigade was broken up on the comple-

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tion of this eventful trek we were sent to Pretoria, occupying the forts during a recuperative period. Regiments after a turn of trekking are sent to places like Pretoria, Johannesburg, &c. During arrival time one feels like the tempest-blown mariner sailing into a calm harbour, prayers of thankfulness for the respite from the terrible marching and awful outpost duty being heard on all sides. We had worked hard every day strengthening and extending our positions with "jerry builders" haste and life-preserving eagerness. Looking at us Tommies humming through the trenches you would instantly conclude that a contract job had fallen in rear of the time limit, and that we were striving furiously to save expenses. This keenness for work was due partly to the Yorkshireman's love of doing something, and partly to a devotion to Colonel Kitchener for his unfailing kindness and consideration for everyone. After Colonel Kitchener was promoted Brigadier General into the Lancashire Brigade and Major Fry took command of the regiment this keenness for work continued, and from being originally the 14th Regiment we were nicknamed by other Regiments for our industry the "14th Navvies."

C. I. V.'s and 14th Navvies.

It was usual for regiments traversing ground on which we had been previously on seeing some elaborate trenching work to exclaim, "Hallo! the 14th Navvies have been here." After passing through Langs Nek, and while laying in Standerton, we were ordered to Welverdeend, a station on the Johannesburg Potchefstroom Railway, to take part in a trek, under Lord Kitchener, after De Wet. The latter, pursued by Lord Kitchener, was moving towards this part of the railway. To prevent him crossing Infantry Regiments, under the command of Major-General Smith Dorrien, held the line from Bank Station to Welverdeend. On being allotted our position we, who constituted a part of this force, commenced to

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entrench, to the evident amazement and amusement of our "neighbours," *i.e.*, the C.I.V.'s. As a result of this apparently self-imposed labour the following dialogue took place between the two regiments:—Chorus of C.I.V.'s: "Hallo there!" "are you fellows prospecting for gold? We think you are from the way you make the clods fly. Why, we can scarcely see you through the clouds of powdered earth. Just arrived from the old country, we dare say. My, my, West Yorks, you should not believe all those yarns you heard at home about finding gold out here; it is all rot" Chorus of West Yorkshires: "We are not prospectors looking for gold, C.I.V.'s, we are the 14th Navvies building battlefield headgear. If you were down Colenso way and saw Buller's army taking cover, why you'd think the whole Rand was rooting for gold on the banks of the Tugela. You may believe us when we tell you, C.I.V.'s, there's many a mother in Yorkshire to-day who should thank her stars that when her son 'listed' in the army he joined the 14th Navvies. Unfortunately, or perhaps fortunately, De Wet did not oblige any of the regiments. No, for he slept soundly that night a few miles on the outside of the extreme right one. In the morning a strangely entrancing mirage-like scene appeared upon the sky line, the mysterious nature of which created widespread speculation in the camp. Magic-like a drab speck of colour shot suddenly above the dingy face of a far-away plateau. Then, rivulet-like it rolled unceasingly onwards, till a nut-brown ribbon of horsemen fringed the horizon from left to right, as far as the eye could see. This moving weird peep-o'-day scene was formed by Lord Kitchener's equine legions, marching silently across the arid veldt.

Lord Kitchener paid a visit to his brother's old regiment, chatted with the officers, and in appearance looked seriously happy. The same day, the 12th August, we resumed our chase of De Wet.

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Lord Kitchener, with the mounted men and Artillery, galloped away in front ; nine Infantry regiments and some guns marching with the convoy in rear. The reason for such a strong escort existed in De Wet's habit of doubling back and stocking his commissariat from our carts of bully-beef. Our *modus operandi* was as follows :—We marched with the convoy as far as possible during the day, halted for a rest, trekking again at night, making two forced marches in twenty-four hours.

A Unique Scene.

Continually running backwards and forwards supplying with rations the mounted men in front, was a conglomeration of the most comical-looking vehicles to be found upon the globe. You would imagine the contents of St. Patrick's coach-house, Brian Boru's coach-house, King Billy's coach-house, with Fion Macoul's cradle, and all the dilapidated traps and yokes in use with respectable Irish families one hundred years ago, and lying in antiquated coach-houses ever since were commandeered for this special work. Dilapidated old ramshackles, looking as if they had been at Handy Andy's wedding ; dilapidated old phætons, looking as if they carried Con the Shaughran to mass ; dilapidated old gigs, looking as if they had taken Harvey Duff to the market ; even American trotting sulkies, with boxes tied on the saddle, were pressed into the service ; in fact anything that could move quickly and carry grub. One of the latter whose ricketty right wheel played the Bells of Shandon, as its left one articulated, "how long, Oh Lord, how long," in the voice of a despairing beggar, bronght up the end of the ration carrying "cavalcade"—a woe-begone unit 200 yards in rear. When, like the last of the Mohicans, its spider-like form bearing an immense box, and an immense Tommy, hove in sight peals of mocking laughter greeted its dingy appearance on the scene. It was drawn by a bob-

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tailed nag, the rattle of whose limping gait rang triangle-like through the doleful music of the tiny ramshackle. It was driven by a serviceable-looking soldier, whose khaki uniform duplicated the robe of a butcher's "Swop." On drawing nigh the driver kept jerking his thumb rearwards directing our attention to something abaft his back. Once alongside, salvos of applause proclaimed the interpretation of his action, for a battered old helmet crowned the edge of the box before which he was sitting, and 'neath it, emblazoned in military colours, shone an immense picture of Monkey Brand. The following poetical effusion at the foot of the portrait completed the most mirth-provoking picture of the South African War, viz :—

" I'm Monkey Brand up from the Rand,
And though I cannot wash,
Be heaven's boys, before your eyes
De Wet I'm going to smash."

When the jingling equipage halted, the battered helmet rocking above Monkey Brands visage, represented the latter as bowing courteously to the greetings bestowed upon the latest General out to capture De Wet. On re-starting renewed cheering burst forth from the soldiers, company on company taking it up along the whole line, till with helmet still a-rocking, and Monkey Brand bowing acknowledgements, the famous "Sharky" and his sulky disappeared from view.

On the 16th of August the regiment marched to Brakfontein—Eland's River—to relieve a party of 500 Australian Bushmen and Rhodesians under Colonel Hoare, besieged by the Boers. On arrival we found them already released by Colonel Broadwood. De Wet escaped through Oliphant's Nek, and although the passes were blocked against his return, the "side tracking" of his convoy enabled him to get back over the mountain on the right of Commando Nek to his happy hunting grounds.

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Bird Life.

The birds in this part of Africa are termed tropical songsters. The thrush sings three bars like the home one, the remainder Kaffir. The blackbird whistles two notes like the home one, and then a long spell of muteness before repetition. You would imagine both had been for some time in the old country, but not quite long enough to learn the whole tune.

An Infallible Astronomer.

On dry days the camp was struck and we were served with blankets to be rigged up as shelters, or as any temporary shades are called in this country, "Musheboos." We pitched our "Musheboos" as we would at home in a manner likely to counteract the rays of the circling sun. However, on completing our "Musheboos," old "Sol's" lamp still blazed within their soldier-hiding hearts in a most unaccountable manner. This puzzled us very much for some time; but every regiment possesses an undeveloped genius, and in ours the sun rays like the x-rays revealed amidst a horde of dunder-headed Tommies—a wonderful Astronomer. On his discovery he lectured our sun-baffled fellows as follows:—"Now, look here lads, I am no Sir Isaac Newton!" a voice—"you are, but you are too modest to admit it." I say I am no Sir Isaac Newton, but I have crossed the line three times, in February, May, and November. On each occasion by coming from under the awning at mid-day, I had no shadow which proved to me that the sun rising in the east goes straight over the Equator every day in the year without deviating a hair's breadth. Now it stands to reason when you were in the United Kingdom, which is well north of the Equator, you always saw sun in the south. At present you are living in South Africa—well south of the Equator. Consequently you will see the sun in the north. You must

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remember, the climate in this country is just the reverse of what you have been used to at home. In South Africa the longest mid-summer day is the 21st of December, the shortest mid-winter day at home. Now, if you look towards the east and watch the rising sun, you will find that instead of beating to your right as you have been accustomed to in England, it will beat to your left through the sky in the north. Now, gentlemen of the West Yorkshires this lucid lecture on astronomical phenomena, should enable you to pitch your "Musheboos."

A Non-Converted Irishman.

We had one man who was incorrigible in the disbelief that the sun could possibly shine in the north. Against the latter his tirade ran as follows:—"Now look here, lads, since I was born I have seen the sun in the south, my father and mother saw the sun in the south; my ancestors for centuries had seen the sun in the south; now, I go on board a ship at Southampton, and twenty-two days later you want to cram it down my throat that the sun never shone other than in the north—"Naboklish." Look here lads, whatever fairy tales you spin when you get home, for God's sake never tell the people you saw the sun shining in the north; if you do, they will sprinkle you with holy water.

Tommy's Piety.

Divine service was held on Sunday, the congregation being formed of men off duty. Different denominations — fancy religions of all grades—paraded in square, tinkers, bakers, nailors, tailors, and flat-footed non-descripts framing a burly Quaker Oats-like clergyman, *i.e.*, a devil-dodger of the fat and heavy type. The contrast between the rawny Tommies and the rosy Padre, about to start hymn-singing on the barren veldt, vividly depicted the different results of good and bad living. Of course,

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you understand I mean the results of living on high diet in a cloth coat, and low grub in a khaki tunic.

We attended in fighting order, with rifle, ammunition, &c., ready for any emergency. An unbiassed spectator witnessing our devotion, with a Bible in one hand, and a rifle in the other, would assuredly say we were a selfish lot of bigots. Yes, bigots, reading from our left hand an appeal for admission to heaven, and ready, at a moment's notice, to despatch with right hand our enemies to the lowest hobs of hell. A comical incident occurred one Sunday. The Padre was reading the after service prayer, in which occurs:—"Thrust satan down to hell, and with him the other wicked spirits who loiter around regimental canteens to commandeer a flowing bowl." When the Padre had come to the part—"Thrust satan down to hell,&c.,&c," Private Johnny Loftus, a Leeds Irishman, sang out—"Thrust satan down to hell yourself," "what do you get your pay for?" If you're not strong enough to do so, ask John L. Sullivan to give a hand."

An Ill Wind, &c.

One of the trucks of the wrecked armoured train was turned into a miniature "chapel" by the "Padre" of the Border Regiment, and not only on Sundays, but every other week day, hordes of Tommies made a soul-saving pilgrimage to the unconsecrated shrine. Its lowly "altar" stood barely eighteen inches above the ground, and, unlike homeland tabernacles, the Padre, who dispensed its much sought for blessings, sat, not knelt upon, its wax-laden stool. When the service was at its "sole-saving" height—well, as you may guess, a lapstone rattled on the Padre's vestment (apron), as the hammer of the Border Regiment's cobbler flew up and down. Yes, the shell-shattered truck of the armoured train proved, on being turned into a shoemaker's shop, the accuracy of the old proverb, "'tis an ill wind blows nobody good." Yes, indeed, it was wax, wax, wax, on every side, when

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Boer shells were bursting within its bosom, a natural precedent to the cry, wax, wax, wax, which rang within its patched up interior, as the Border's cobbler plunged awl and needle through the battered features of an old boot.

General Buller raised a corps of 1,000 civilian stretcher-bearers nicknamed by Tommy "the body snatchers." This body was principally composed of Transvaal refugees who had cleared down to Maritzburg and Durban before the war started, and who, being unable to ride and shoot, were not eligible for a colonial corps, and were glad of this opportunity to "strike a blow" as they said for the old country. After Colenso some men of this corps "put in passes" to visit their friends in the Boer lines at Colenso; but in the expressive language of Tommy Atkins, General Buller "was not having any," disbanded the stretcher-bearers, and raised a new corps, the majority of the old hands rejoining. Anyone witnessing the "cucumber-cool" manner with which these men weeded the wounded out of the firing line would designate them matchless in the category of heroism. In peace time the stretcher-bearers were camped well to the rear of the army; and, like swallows heralding the advent of summer, their appearance in camp was the signal of impending battle. Then the shout went round—"A fight, a fight: we're for it boys, we're for it; the body-snatchers have come to the front."

Master Tailors of regiments were left behind at Maritzburg, but ours, Sergeant Wakely, volunteered for the front, and as a stretcher-bearer went through the Relief of Ladysmith. He could have stayed behind in comfortable quarters at Maritzburg, and it was certainly very plucky on his part to volunteer into a corps which often heard the bullets sing. However, there is no direful situation without some redeeming feature, and though Sergeant Wakely wielded not a rifle he loved to tread the path of glory across which the music of the latter rang.

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Old Nick "Fights Shy" of the Firing Line.

The devil never goes near the firing line, and therefore can never whisper in people's ears who are there:—"Form a bogus contract for the purchase and sale of dead men's boots." No, the devil remained at home in Warwickshire, and compelled Tommy Atkin's to carry out his contract job, *i.e.*, using up Brummagem ammunition upon the South African "Shoot." General Buller's force was now sufficiently strong to move on Ladysmith. Accordingly on December the 14th we advanced to Chievely some five miles from Colenso. The march was done quickly and in business style, a contrast to our retirement on Frere after the Brynbella fight. This alertness was attributable to our getting nearer the veteran stage, and seeing things as they were, not as our imagination pictured them. In the afternoon, the Naval guns, accompanied by an escort, made a demonstration against Colenso, shelled the Boer positions, but failed to get a reply.

Colenso,

December 15th. Struck camp, laagered wagons at 2.30 a.m., and moved forward to within about two miles or so of Colenso, where we halted and formed battle formation. General Buller had under his command four brigades of infantry—2nd Hildyard's English Brigade consisting of the 2nd Devons, the 2nd Queens or West Surrey, the 2nd West Yorkshire, and the 2nd East Surrey; the 4th Lyttleton's Brigade comprising the 2nd Cameronians, the 3rd Rifles, the 1st Durhams and the 1st Rifle Brigade; the 5th Hart's Irish Brigade with the 1st Inniskilling Fusiliers, the 1st Connaught Rangers, the 2nd Dublin Fusiliers, and the Border Regiment, this last taking the place of the 2nd Irish Rifles who were with Gatacre; the 6th Barton's Fusilier Brigade, the 2nd Royal Fusiliers, the 2nd Scots Fusiliers, the 1st Welsh Fusiliers, and the 2nd Irish Fusiliers, in all about 16,000 infantry.

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The mounted men who were commanded by Lord Dundonald included the 13th Hussars, the 1st Royals, Bethune's Mounted Infantry, Thorneycroft's Mounted Infantry, three squadrons of South African Light Horse with a composite regiment formed from the mounted infantry of the Rifles and of the Dublin Fusiliers, with squadrons of the Natal Carabineers and the Imperial Light Horse. The artillery consisted of five batteries (30 guns) of the Field Artillery, the 7th, 14th, 63rd, 64th, and 66th. The Field Artillery threw a common shell 6,500 yards, shrapnel 4,500 yards. Common shell bursts on hitting an object, while shrapnel, stuffed with small bullets is exploded by means of a time fuse twelve feet above and sixty feet in front of the object; and the discharged bullets receiving no impetus save from the speed of the exploded shell, are not effective for ranges much over 4,500 yards. There were sixteen naval guns from H.M.S. Terrible—fourteen twelve pounders, and two 4.7s. The twelve pounder threw common shell 9,000 to 10,000 yards, and the 4.7., a 45½ pound common or lyddite shell 12,000 yards. The whole force moving on Colenso numbered about 21,000 men.

ORDERS ISSUED BY GENERAL BULLER ON THE MORNING OF DECEMBER 15TH, 1899:—

1. The enemy is entrenched in the kopjes north of Colenso Bridge. One camp is reported to be near the Ladysmith Road, about five miles north-west of Colenso; another camp is reported in the hills which lie north of the Tugela, in a northerly direction from Hlangwaini Hill.

2. It is the intention of the G. O. C. to force the passage of the Tugela to-day.

3. The 5th Brigade will move off at 4.30 a.m. and cross at the Bridge Drift, immediately west of the junction of Dornkop, Spruit and the Tugela, and after crossing will move down the left bank of the

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river towards kopjes north of iron bridge (*i.e.*, road bridge).

4. The 4th Brigade will advance at 4.30 a.m. to a point between Bridle Drift and the railway, so that it can support either 5th or 2nd Brigade.

5. The 6th Brigade, less half Battalion escort to baggage, will move at 4 a.m. to a position whence it can protect right flank of 2nd Brigade, and, if necessary, support it or the mounted troops, referred to later on, moving towards Hlangwaini Hill.

6. The O. C. mounted troops will move off at 4 a.m, with a force of 1,000 men and one Battery of No. 1 Brigade Division in the direction of Hlangwaini Hill to cover the right flank, and take up a position on Hlangwaini Hill, whence he can enfilade the kopjes north of iron bridge; forces of 300 and 500 Cavalry will also watch the right and left flanks respectively.

7. The 2nd Brigade Division R.F.A. will follow the 4th Brigade, and take up a position whence it can enfilade the kopjes north of iron bridge. Six Naval Guns, 2·47 and four 12 pounders will come into action on right off 2nd Brigade Division R.F.A. (less one Battery detached with Mounted Brigade) will proceed under cover of 6th Brigade to a place whence it can prepare the crossing of the 2nd Brigade; the other six Naval Guns will act with this Brigade Division.

8. The 2nd Brigade will move from its present camping ground at 4 a.m. and, passing south of present camping ground of Nos. 1 and 2 Divisional Troops, will move to a point between the railway line and the Artillery, west of railway, whence it can secure these guns and await their preparatory fire before advancing to cross the Tugela at Colenso with the object of gaining the kopjes north of iron bridge.

BRIGADE ORDERS BY GENERAL HILDYARD, C.B.

The 2nd Brigade was formed as follows:—

(*a*) 1st Line—2nd Queens on right, 2nd Devons on left, with a Battalion front of 400 yards.

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2nd Line—At a distance of about 800 yards half Battalion West Yorkshire Regiment, with Headquarters on the right, 2nd East Surrey Regiment on the left.

3rd Line—Half Battalion West Yorkshire Regiment (at the immediate disposal of the Major-General) will follow at about 800 yards.

(*b*) The first objective will be the village of Colenso. After this has been occupied, the 2nd Queens will endeavour to effect a passage at the railway bridge, and the 2nd Devons at iron road bridge, and at the drift which is reported to be fifty yards west of it up stream.

(*c*) Should only one passage be gained the 2nd Line will be pushed through at that spot, and assist in seizing the kopjes, the Battalion at the other passage assisting the operation with its fire, and eventually forming fresh reserve.

(*d*) Should a passage be effected at both points connection will be re-established as soon as possible between the Battalion.

10. The O.C.R.E. will detail a detachment with explosives and wire nippers to accompany each Battalion in 1st Line. He will arrange to reconnoitre passages as possession of the bank is gained, and will endeavour to establish a means of crossing at the most favourable spot.

11. The ambulance of the Bearer Company will follow the 3rd Line, the dressing station will be established as far forward as possible on the railway in a sheltered position.

The O.C. Bearer Company will make his own arrangements for the collecting station immediately in rear of the troops.

12. The ammunition mules and S.A.A. carts, from which the ammunition is expended before crossing the river is to be replaced, will accompany the Battalion. The remainder will form the Brigade ammunition reserve, in rear of 3rd Line (an officer 2nd West Yorks Regiment).

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13. Each Infantry soldier will carry 150 rounds on his person, the ammunition now being carried in the ox wagons of regimental transport being distributed.

From where we formed up the whole scene of battle stretched out before you like a panorama. You will see the Tugela coming down on your left front, leaving Grobelar's Kloof, the extreme right Boer position well on the outside then sweeping straight across your face passing close to Colenso, leaving the latter on your side, and about half way to where it sweeps up again on your right front, leaving Hlangwani Hill, the extreme left Boer position, about half a mile on the outside. Of course, the enemies' left is on your right, and *vice versa*. Hlangwani is a fair-sized hill running parallel to and about half a mile outside the Tugela. On the river side, sloping steeply, but on the reverse, like most South African hills, ascending gently and enabling the Boers to get guns in positions, which from our side looked inaccessible.

Inspecting Hlangwana,

When coming this way in the actions effecting the relief of Ladysmith, we camped for an evening on Hlangwani and minutely inspected its trenches. This hill was strongly held, the Boers considering it the key to Ladysmith, as General Buller getting possession could, with artillery on its dominating cone, enfilade the trenches north of Colenso. The brow and slope of this hill facing our way was heavily entrenched, and trenches, all of the same pattern, were scattered from top to bottom along the Tugela side. The rifle pits were half-moon shape, dug to a depth of five feet or so; the ground immediately around their throats being packed with layers of sand bags, to a thickness and height of several feet, leaving loop-holes on the ground line to blaze through. In this way each man could fire standing, with several feet of bullet-proof cover overhead. In

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front, earth piled to the top of the sand bags sloped gradually away, and through bearing a breast of green sods, branches of trees, etc., looked quite natural, despite the tiny tunnels for rifle fire. Standing in front of one of these trenches, you may, on seeing the loop-holes imagine a rabbit burrow, but never a deadly pit. Float Hlangwani and you have an original Dreadnought.

Where the Guns were Captured.

Walking off Hlangwani, cross over to the Tugela about half a mile away, then turn to your left and keep along the bank up stream, after a bit you will reach the bend of the river, where it shoots straight across on passing Colenso. A short walk and you "strike" the place whence the Boers fired on Long's guns. An intelligent Boer of the Standerton Commando told us at Standerton there were no Boers at this particular spot at the commencement of the fight. He said:—"On seeing the guns advance 800 of us under Chris. Botha, a brother of Louis Botha, slipped off Hlangwani Hill across to the Tugela, crept up along the river bank and lined out within 800 yards of where the guns actually formed up. It was easy enough negotiating this portion of ground without being seen, as hundreds of small trees form connecting screens all round. As we watched the guns approach we were twitching with impatience to let the trigger fingers "go," but were prevented by Chris. Botha continually calling out:—"Let no one fire until the artillery forms up; if you fire before, they will gallop away unharmed. Let them unlimber and carry the horses to the rear, then fire." "The twelve guns unlimbered in line, a few shells were thrown, and then we opened. It was only by a fluke we held our fire as we saw the artillery advancing towards us. The tension was terrible; the cracking of a single match would set our line ablaze." Asked how it was possible

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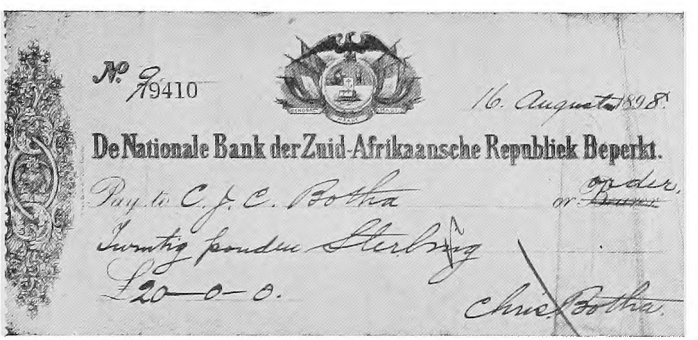
A BOER CHEQUE.



Signature of the Man who Captured Long's Guns.

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after the contretemps, for two teams of horses to be galloped up attached to two of the guns and get clear away within 800 yards of 800 riflemen, he said:— "Astonishment, astonishment! we were so astonished that men would do such a thing we got flabbergasted and fired high." At the present time, marking the positions of the captured guns are twelve square white stones, with the number of the gun, one to twelve, and the battery to which it belonged, fourteenth or sixty-sixth engraved on each. We remember being out with two companies of ours, and a detachment of Victoria Mounted Rifles (Australians) on what a Scotchman would designate "a wee expedition" from Oliphants Nek. The Australians were covering our retirement on the return journey when half a dozen Boers were seen in the distance, unconsciously riding towards them. Chuckling with delight at the thoughts of participating in some rifle, lasso, and bayonet work, the Australians at once formed an ambush athwart the unsuspecting on-comers line of march. The near approach of the Boers however, set hearts a-thumping, and hands a-fumbling, at which an Australian rifle went off. On hearing the nervous watch-dogs bark, the foxes of the veldt vanished like magic o'er the adjacent hills.

Men lying in wait for an approaching enemy are straining on the leash, as it were, and are dependent for their steadiness on the most excitable one of their party. At Colenso, allowing the Artillery advance, form up and unlimber before firing, was magnificent discipline on the Boer side. Keeping along the bank for eight or nine hundred yards from where the guns were captured you come to the Colenso railway bridge, over which Hildyard's English Brigade was to have reached the kopjes on the other side. About a thousand yards further on you reach the road or iron bridge, the crossing of which was mapped out for Lyttleton's Brigade, and further afield Bridle Drift, the negotiating of which was

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allotted to Hart's Irish Corps. On this day, however, the river being flooded, Bridle Drift was, unfortunately or fortunately, non-existent. In the distance, a long way outside the Tugela, is Grobelars Kloof, the extreme right position of the Boers.

Fort Wylie.

Cross the railway bridge, and on your left front, a few hundred yards away, is Fort Wylie, After coming off Hlangwani Hill, on the way to Ladysmith, we bivouacked near Fort Wylie and had a look round the trenches. Fort Wylie is a small kopje, about one half the length, one-fourth the height, but broader than the Lusitania. Cut across the whole of its breadth in rear ran a trench about ten feet deep and eight feet broad. Sand bags loop-holed to fire through were reached by steps let into the front side of the trench. Fort Wylie, standing as it does conspicuously alone, was considered by the Boers too tempting a target for our artillery, and consequently was evacuated during the initiation of the attack on Colenso. If anyone had occupied it throughout that engagement and lived afterwards to be as old as Methusela in all that time never, except when he was asleep, and possibly not then, would the impression of the gutting it got leave his memory.

When we saw Fort Wylie its nooks, corners and trench were crammed with Mauser rifle ammunition, which the Boers in their retreat evidently had not time to get away. Out on the level, not far from Fort Wylie and to the left as you look Colenso way, a long, cunning-looking trench for firing kneeling seared the ground. From the top of this trench the earth sloped gradually out for twenty or thirty feet, taking away the jumpy, steeplechase ditch appearance of the English shelter trench, making it quite indistinguishable even at a very short space from the surrounding ground.

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Boer Main Position—Impregnable Trenches.

Looking towards Colenso from Fort Wylie a few hundred yards on your right, and between it and the Tugela, running up and down paralled with the river where it sweeps round towards Colenso, on your right front, are a conglomeration of very low kopjes like the billows of an angry sea. These series of hunchbacked hillocks formed the main Boer position at the battle of Colenso. From here the Burgher rifles could sweep the approaches to the submerged Bridle Drift road and railway bridges, and could concentrate a tremendous fire on the latter, the only practical crossing places on the Tugela. The cones of those kopjes were flattened out, leaving everything clear for rifle work, entrenched roads were cut zig-zag through them, thick boulder walls, hollowed in the centre, to enable the marksman to stand well in under the head cover, were built into the side nearest the Tugela; loop-holes for rifle fire were cut from the top of each wall across the little kopjes. These loop-holes were roofed with planks, and in some places railway sleepers, banked over with sods, perfectly shell proof, and projecting back well over the Mauser manipulator. It's no wonder Boer invisibility reigned supreme at Colenso. The Boers looked out at you like so many hooded photographers. Colenso is the best natural defensive position in the world. No engineer, if he had the laying out of those kopjes, could improve their position for repelling assault, nor would he change the natural course of the Tugela. Taking into account the natural positions and entrenchments, no field army was ever posted in such a stronghold. Every credit is due to the Boers for their skill and energy in strengthening those natural defences, but for holding them when attacked none whatever.

Interspersed through the kopjes north of Colenso, minus their masts, bridges, and big guns, sink the

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battleships of the Channel Fleet level with the trenches; then, for two or three hours, shell them with forty or fifty field guns; send the Infantry forward to attack and capture them; there would be nothing surprising except in the non-dissemination of the latter force.

Take the same number of Suffragettes as there were Boers at Colenso, train them to keep cool, hold their tongues, and use rifles instead of hatpins, place them in the trenches, and give them the franchise. Then, for two or three hours, tickle their railway line head-cover with shrapnel, advance the Infantry to attack them and capture the franchise, it would be odds on their having to retire leaving the franchise in possession of the Suffragettes.

Botha's Omdurman.

At the Battle of Omdurman, on seeing the Dervishes advance across the open to attack his army Lord Kitchener said:—"The Lord has delivered them into my hands." At Colenso the Boers on seeing the English Infantry advance down an open slope without a particle of cover said the devil was performing the same miracle for them. At Colenso the Boers occupied three positions. As we looked at the latter, Grobelars Kloof on the extreme left, where some big guns were posted, was ignored on account of being such a distance outside the Tugela except when the 4.7's paid attention to its guns. The kopjes north of Colenso, with only two practical approaches, the road and railway bridges over the Tugela, and Hlangwani Hill outside the Tugela on the right. The country sloping gently down to the Tugela is comparatively devoid of cover, the very low ant hills affording none whatever. Apparently the ants had formed a compact with the Boers, for they most certainly built much smaller hills round here than in any part of the country we had seen.

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The Action Opens.

At 4.30 a.m. the action was opened by the whole of the Artillery in line, shelling the exact position of the enemy in the kopjes north of Colenso. The Boers admit the shell fire was very correct, but that rather too much attention was paid to Fort Wylie, which was unoccupied. However true the aim may be the shells were too light to be effective, and made very little impression. It would require parks of siege guns to prepare the way for an attack. After the Artillery had been in action for some time the Infantry advanced under cover of the big-gun fire. Hildyard's English Brigade marched on the left of the railway and close to it:—2nd West Surreys, No. 1; 2nd Devons, No. 2; 2nd East Surreys, No. 3; and 2nd West Yorks, No. 4. At the commencement of each engagement regiments took turn about as the leading regiment or No. 1; next engagement, No. 4; and subsequent affairs—numbers 3, 2, 1. As the West Yorks were in the firing line at Willow Grange we became No. 4 at Colenso. Lyttleton's Rifle Brigade advancing on our left, and Hart's Irish Brigade on theirs. On our right, and on the right of the railway the mounted men supported by Barton's Fusilier Brigade advanced on Hlangwani Hill. If things turned out as expected the Irish Brigade on the left would have crossed the Tugela at Bridle Drift, the Rifle Brigade on their right at the road or iron bridge, ours or the English Brigade on their right at the railway bridge after passing through Colenso. The English Brigade advanced slowly in columns of half companies six paces between files.

A Solemn and Silent Advance.

Probably never before have soldiers conducted themselves so gravely, so silently, so decorously, as the troops did when moving down on Colenso. Such edifying and gentlemanly conduct would gain admittance to the most exclusive circles without

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a Freemason's introductory card. As we jogged along, and no sight of or sound from the enemy, everyone came to the conclusion that the Boers had deserted their positions. So we broke into a brisker pace with a little touch of swing and swagger, what Tommy calls, "boiler and tank." Pipes were lit, snatches of songs were hummed, when suddenly a terrific rifle-fire opening from the Boer main position on the leading regiments of the Irish Brigade approaching Bridle Drift, the leading regiments of the Rifle Brigade approaching the road-bridge, and the leading regiments of the English Brigade approaching Colenso, quenched the dudheens, stopped the humming, and changed the whole tune. Perhaps never in history was there such a rattle of musketry, certainly no previous Field Army ever had such vitriolic lead showering weapons. To thoroughly appreciate a modern rifle-fusilade you must be somewhere in position facing the muzzles of the latter. A rifle fired with the butt pointing in your direction makes one report—bang; but with the muzzle pointing your way there are two distinct reports. At ranges over 500 yards you would imagine the rifle articulates distinctly the words: ping pong. The further away the more distinctly you hear this peculiar sound, and at long range there is a good interval between ping and pong. When on the trek and the skirmishing line moves off in the morning you immediately hear this familiar sound, the "snipers" God speed; and on the whole route to the next bivouac your march is punctuated with ping pongs.

From the kopje on the right, ping pong; from the rock on the left, ping pong; from the donga on the right rear, ping pong; the drift on the left rear, ping pong; the reed-covered river bank, ping pong; from the hole in the ground, ping pong; from the farm-house flying the white flag, ping pong; and often in your bivouac at night, star gazing, or dreaming,

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perhaps, of home and beauty from the dark would ring out the eternal ping pong. The man in the street would ask how it was those snipers were not blown off the earth. The man on the veldt would say:—"What a pity he did not come out and try." At one time it was feared we would develop ping pong brain, which luckily did not come off, for, as we suffered slightly from Mauserites, the combination would have been deplorable. Sniper hunting is a rather risky pastime; infantry could never catch the will-o'-the-wisp of the veldt. Cavalry may succeed in galloping round him—not much of a capture—or they may find he was simply a decoy for an ambush laying in the vicinity. Then the General gets blown up by Boer bullets and English tongues, while stay-at-home Piccadilly tender toes cry "shame." On this account the sniper was ignored, and rightly so, the sniper's ping pong being worse than his bullet. Firing at night the sniper is never replied to. Safely ensconced behind a rock he simply wants to locate your whereabouts by the flash from your rifle, but getting no reply the silence sets him thinking, his imagination runs riot, some one with a fixed bayonet is stalking him, and he "scoots." The pom pom is the sniper's terror, and after ours came out a column supplied with a few was put "out of bounds" by the bearded jackal of the veldt.

Unparalleled Rifle Fire.

Imagine some thousands of magazine rifles double-sounding, and you will have some idea of the tremendous row at Colenso. When the rifle fire opened the leading regiments of our Brigade, West Surreys and Devons, reached Colenso by short rushes, the former holding the railway station. Our regiment being in the reserve did not get probably to within 1,200 yards of Colenso. The rifle fire directed at us passed about 100 yards in front of where we lay, the loop-holes of

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their trenches not being at an angle to enable the riflemen to fire straight at the regiment. Their judging distance was correct, but as our fellows said too much "left windgage" controlled their aim. Judging by the innumerable little dust-devils kicked up by the bullets the former resembling the bubbles produced in water by the first big drops of a tropical shower, the fire was the closest on record. With heads bent towards this leaden rain we lay for hours, a brilliant prospect in front, a bullet-swept plain, and at any moment the advance may ring out which would send us through and a good many to the extremes of the universe. How did the fellows behave in those very trying circumstances? Did they pray? Did they swear? Did they cry? They did neither; they watched the little dust-devils; grew tired of watching, and went fast to sleep, at least most of them did; and a beautiful accompaniment to the music of the nicest rifle-fire on record was the snoring of the West Yorkshires. The rifle fire had now eased down considerably, and ceased altogether in our direction.

Our advanced regiments were waiting for Colonel Long's Artillery, which was to cover by a flank fire our Brigades crossing of the Colenso railway bridge. Colonel Long's command, consisting of two field batteries, the 14th and 66th, and six naval guns—two 4·7's, four twelve-pounders, under Lieutenant O'Gilvy of the Terrible—detached themselves from the main body of Artillery, crossed the railway, and moved down towards the Tugela on our immediate right.

The horse batteries, evidently impatient at the slow progress of the bullock-drawn naval guns, cantered away by themselves, formed up, and unlimbered 800 yards from the river.

A Record Rifle Fire on Long's Guns.

The twelve guns were in line, half left formation

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from the Tugela. From here they shelled Fort Wylie, the only position of the Boers it was possible for them to see. Three or four shells were thrown when they were overpowered by a terrific rifle fire from 800 Boers lying along the river bank on their right. Anyone who understands anything of musketry will appreciate the effect 800 good shots with magazine rifles firing from a flank at 800 yards would have on two batteries who were firing at an object straight in front. No artillery ever came under anything like the blizzard of lead which broke over the fourteenth and sixty-sixth batteries; one rifle at Colenso was more effective than probably thirty muskets at Waterloo; and no men under heaven could behave better. A few were blown into a donga hard by; and to see men trying to work the guns after a deluge of lead like a water spout had burst on them, was a sight to rouse the enthusiasm of the gods.

General Buller, who with his staff was in rear with the artillery galloped straight down, halted for a few minutes about one hundred yards on our left, then turned to the right and cantered over to our Company. I was left hand man of the Company and General Buller drew up on the right of his staff and about three feet on the left of where I lay and from here watched the disaster to his guns. He kept raising his hand, rapidly stroking his chin, and then turning the palm upwards dropped his hand heavily on his thigh, like a brave man who has just received news of the sudden death of his favourite son.

Fired by The Roll of A Spectral Drum, Lieutenant Roberts Leads The Gun Rescuing Party, and Falls on the Banks of The Tugela.

After watching the guns for a few minutes, General Buller and staff galloped across the railway line and down to the donga where the limbers lay. Then it was that the face of the English army grew white, as its grey-haired General beheld with wistful eyes

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his trapped gunners, rise, and sink, 'midst Tugela's bullet-spitting vortex. Then it was that young Roberts heard the roll of the invisible drum—that drum to whose war-notes the gates of Kandahar flew open twenty-four years previously. Louder and louder grew its beat as the flood of battle swamped the guns and gunners of the 14th and 66th Batteries. In a moment the noble profession of arms tossed its proud "frontlet" on high, and then three sabres flashed from out the scabbards of Lieutenants Schofield, Congreve and Roberts. To the clink of the blue steel six gallant drivers clenched their teeth, reigned tightly their steeds, and with spurs poised to strike home awaited the "do or die" order of three volunteer Commandants. It came when a youthful voice roared "Bring back the guns or die beside them." Then, with throbbing hearts and straining eyes, we watched the gallant drivers stream across the vale of death, and pale grew their cheeks as they rode past the mangled remains of bombardier and gunner. But the noble profession of arms had tossed its proud "frontlet" on high and, pale with pride, not with fear, grew the gallant drivers. How our breaths came and went with the expectation of what was to be their fate as they drew near the bullet-marked cannon. With a circling sweep they pull up, dismount, and 'midst a leaden cyclone hitch their horses. Then back to the British lines they bear two British guns back behind two human crests, Schofield and Congreve, for one plume of England's proud "frontlet"—young Roberts had fallen. Born within the lines, he died gloriously beside them. Above his battlefield grave an angel of martial love holds the Insignia of the brave—Victoria's Cross of Valour.

Riding To Glory Or The Grave, Upon Tradition's Footsteps.

Once again the noble profession of arms has tossed

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its proud "frontlet" on high, and 'neath it Captain Reed, with six fresh drivers, sallies forth to emulate the heroism of the lads from whose ranks young Roberts had fallen. As they gather rein to plunge through the leaden vortex traditions tongue repeats its glorious order. Then, with spurs stuck deep in their horses' flanks, the drivers ride as no men ever rode before, for tradition's voice had roused the echoes of countless graves, and recalled the memories of dauntless forefathers. With wistful eyes we watched them ride down to a Tugela grave; for no sooner had the front team touched the zone of fire than it disappeared for ever. But the heroes of the second team quailed not before the flood of death into which the leaders had vanished. No, for tradition's voice still kept ringing in their ears, "Bring back the guns," or fill a soldier's sepulchre. On entering the zone of fire the horses of the second team behaved as if they had suddenly galloped on to a sheet of ice, sliding forward, slipping down, scrambling up again, then swaying to and fro with the drivers rolling in their saddles. At last men and horses sink to rise no more on the bone-bearing banks of the Tugela. They failed to effect a further rescue of the British guns, but they failed not to obey tradition's command; for, out there on Africa's barren veldt, they fill "a soldier's sepulchre." Taking into consideration the murderous rifle-fire, the rescue of the two guns was a marvellous performance—probably the most brilliant deed ever accomplished in the annals of the army.

General Retirement.

Brilliant though futile attempts—some people said foolish—foolish if you like, but the life of the country producing men who dare such feats is inextinguishable. General Buller seeing the hopelessness of further attempts to save the guns, abandoned them and ordered a general retirement. The retirement

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was a splendid example of cool, bull-dog discipline. Imagine the whole Empire as spectators and each man feeling as if he broke into a brisker pace than an ordinary walk, this vast audience would hiss him, and you will have an idea of the orderly retirement at Colenso; or perhaps he dallied expecting the man he could not get at would go for him. The latter idea would indeed be foolish. A well known fact is the difficulty of getting men to fight in the open who have been used for some time to the protection of a trench: as well expect a hedgehog to leave its natural house on seeing an enemy approach. A vigorous counter attack on the troops retiring from Colenso would then and there have relieved Ladysmith, for on leaving his hedgehog-like domain the fighting Burgher would feel very much at sea before the fighting "Rooinek." A man of the Devons fell out to tie his putty; a shell struck the ground in front covering him over with dust: when the dust cleared away he was still tying his leg-gear: when finished he picked up a fragment of the exploded shell, placed it in his haversack and quietly followed his Company. At this time Boer shells so seldom burst this fragment was worth carrying as a curio. As the brigade retired through the West Yorks, an expression of indignant surprise played upon their features going by, someone sang out:—"We only paid them a morning call, the retnrn visit will be in Pretoria." General Buller has been censured for allowing the Boers to get the guns away. He certainly could have entrenched within range a couple of infantry regiments who could have effectually prevented anyone from interfering with them; but the Boers entrenched on the other side of the river would do likewise, and when General Buller marched round Spion Kop way, the guns would be abandoned.

Colonel Long has also been censured for getting too near the enemy's position. It must be remembered

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the Boers held only one position across the Tugela, the kopjes north of Colenso, the country between them and Hlangwani Hill being perfectly clear; and though this part looked formidable, being seamed with the most villianous looking dongas, there was no necessity to hold it, the river in itself being a sufficient barrier against assault. Colonel Long's orders were to move down and cover by a flank fire the English Brigade's crossing of the Colenso railway bridge.

Colonel Long formed up on the best possible point from which to partially enfilade Fort Wylie, the only commanding position at close quarters on the right flank. To put in an effective fire he would require to be at least as far from the Tugela on the other side as he was on this. Opposed to any other man in the world he was perfectly safe. Regrettable though the mishap to the guns, things might have been much more deplorable. If Long had not been ordered down, the English Brigade would have crossed over the Colenso railway bridge or have tried very hard to do so. The Rifle Brigade would most probably have done likewise at the road bridge. Having got across and reformed, they would see the enemy's positions some hundreds of yards away with an open, level sandy plain between. Now it stands to reason, an enemy manning splendid trenches and armed with magazine rifles would not allow troops to double across this open and rush them out. Neither would they allow them double back. A mythical army might accomplish both feats. Say one composed of "Frank Reed's steam men."

December 16th. Armistice for twenty-four hours to bury dead. Our casualities, Second-Lieutenant Ross wounded by a fragment of shell in leg.

December 17th.—We had pitched camp since our retirement about the spot where we had formed up for our advance on Colenso, but on this date moved further back towards Chieveley. To a small stony

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kopje situated a few hundred yards on the right front of this camp the naval guns were dragged every morning. Then John Bull's anti-bilous pills were dropped into the Boer positions three times a day, *i.e.*, after breakfast, dinner, and tea, purging each burgher's stomach of all "Biltong" impurities. Often these guns were trained on positions supposed to be slept in by Boers, and word was passed round not to be alarmed when the echoes awoke to their thundering mouths during the silent watches of "slumbertime." This bombardment, called siege operations, continued night and day until we moved round Spion Kop, keeping the Boers on the *qui vive* expecting another frontal attack on Colenso.

December 18th.—The naval guns shelled and blew up the road bridge.

Battle of Wagon Hill.

1900, January 6th.—In the early morning very heavy firing heard, both big gun and musketry, in the direction of Ladysmith, which continued all day. About 11 a.m. heliograph received from Ladysmith *via* Umkilinho—"Boers attacked in force at 2.45 a.m.; repulsed with heavy loss on all sides; Lord Ava dangerously wounded in head." This meant that the battle of Wagon Hill had taken place. At 1.30 p.m. a demonstration in force was made towards Colenso to try and draw off the pressure from Ladysmith. The attack, of course, was not pressed; the guns shelled the enemies' positions, but the Boers, lying low, did not reply.

A False Alarm.

One night some mules belonging to the Hospital Ambulance breaking loose stampeded the horses of a cavalry regiment, the whole galloping straight across and close to the front of our brigade. Every man in camp was of one opinion: that the Boers were

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charging up, would dismount and open rapid fire—a very foolish idea, only to be thought of in the mystifying gloom of night. Our rifles were piled outside the tents with bayonets fixed, magazines charged, and accoutrements lying alongside. Every man coming smartly out of his tent donned anyone's straps, picked up anyone's rifle, and went quietly and quickly to his appointed place. There was no panic, and the only words heard were the low whispers passed from mouth to mouth — "Keep cool, keep cool." If one shot had been fired—well, it was not fired. After the campaign was over, and while stationed at Maritzburg, we were ordered up to "Tin Town," a corrugated iron barrack about a mile or two from Ladysmith, for manœuvres, which consisted mainly of the attack and defence of Ladysmith, and, of course, became well acquainted with the surrounding country.

Famed Spion Kop.

Standing on any of the hills to the west of Ladysmith and looking in that direction you will see distinctly, seventeen miles away, two conical hills, and on their immediate right a longish kopje with a plateau on your side leading up to a high ridge rising abruptly on the far end—a kopje on a kopje. This is Spion Kop. The high ridge does not extend the whole length of the hill, sloping away to the ground level in rear of our main position, Rangeworthy, the extreme right of the plateau as you look from Ladysmith—Rangeworthy so called to distinguish it from the part of the kop on which naught save British blood ran smoothly. Between Spion Kop and the hills near Ladysmith, on the side facing Spion Kop, which were occupied by the British, Wagon Hill, Rifleman's Range, &c., the country is an open and perfectly level one. Had the kopje dominating the latter

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prairie-like sphere been completely captured, the Boers, placed thereby between the Devil and the Deep Sea, would be sure to take a middle course and abandon their defence of the main road to Ladysmith.

Rangeworthy Main Position, left of Spion Kop.

January 10th. A second attempt was commenced to relieve Ladysmith, by a turning movement on our left, the capture of Spion Kop being also determined on.

General Buller's force consisted as under :—

Cleary Division.

Hildyard's Brigade,
- 2nd West Surrey.
- 2nd Devonshire.
- 2nd West Yorkshires.
- 2nd East Surrey.

Hart's Brigade,
- Inniskilling Fusiliers.
- Borderers.
- 1st Connaught Rangers.
- 2nd Ryl. Dublin Fusiliers.

Field Artillery, three batteries, 19th, 28th, 63rd; one squadron 13th Hussars; Royal Engineers.

Warren's Division.

Lyttleton's Brigade.
- 2nd Cameronians.
- 3rd King's Royal Rifles.
- 1st Durham Light Infantry
- 1st Rifle Brigade.

Woodgate's Brigade,
- 2nd Royal Lancaster.
- 2nd Lancashire Fusiliers.
- 1st South Lancashire.
- York and Lancaster's.

Field Artillery, three batteries, 7th, 78th, 73rd; one squadron 13th Hussars.

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CORP'S TROOPS.

COKE'S BRIGADE,
- 2nd Royal Warwicks.
- 2nd Somersets.
- 2nd Dorsets
- 2nd Middlesex.

Sixty-first Howitzer Battery; two 4.7 Naval guns; eight Naval twelve-pounder guns; one squadron 13th Hussars; Royal Engineers.

CAVALRY.

1st Royal Dragoons.
14th Hussars.
Four Squadrons South African Horse.
One Squadron Imperial Light Horse.
Bethune's Mounted Infantry.
Thorneycroft's Mounted Infantry.
One Squadron Natal Carabineers.
One Squadron Natal Police.
One Company King's Royal Rifles.
Mounted Infantry. Six Machine Guns.

BARTON'S BRIGADE,
- Royal Fusiliers.
- Royal Irish Fusiliers.
- Royal Scot's Fusiliers.
- Royal Welsh Fusiliers.

This Brigade, with guns, was left behind near Colenso, to guard the line.

The Howitzer used in South Africa was a remarkably short and rather stout gun, throwing a fifty pound shell. On account of its squat muzzle the range is limited to 4,500 yards. With a Howitzer it is not necessary that the gunners should see the object of attack. With the gun in position at the base of a hill, and a man giving the direction and elevation on its summit, the gun-layers can, through the instrumentality of "French's sights," hit an object on its obverse quarter. At close range with its high angle fire it is a most effective gun to shell a trench,

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as it can practically bring a missile down on the heads of the pit-girt enemy. A party of Transvaal Staats Artillery prisoners travelling down by train from Paul Pietersburg direction, Northern Transvaal to Pretoria, chatted interestingly of our artillery fire; and as they had been round Ladysmith way, Colenso, Spion Kop, etc., and afterwards driven across the frontier by General Buller, no men under heaven were better qualified to speak on the subject. They said Lyddite was too powerful an explosive when used in the open, blowing the shell too much in an upward direction, but terrible in confinement, as in a house, cave, etc.; that if a Lyddite shell landed within six feet and you escaped being hit by a fragment the concussion would kill; that striking any distance outside six and up to sixty or seventy feet would render you insensible for a time; that they always carried an antidote which when drunk before shell-fire prevented insensibility. They, however, dreaded the Howitzer most, for with its shell dropping almost vertically, nothing was wanted to complete your grave-head but a tombstone.

Struck camp at 4 a.m. and marched to Pretorious Farm, distance eight miles west of Chieveley. It was now the rainy season, the continual downpour had completely turned the country into a marsh and swelled the innumerable spruits, making travelling slow and terribly difficult. We furnished one of the regiments of the rear guard, and when crossing sodden patches were told off to man-handle some of the Naval guns.

A Roadless Country.

Except in the vicinity of the towns there are no made or prepared roads in South Africa. The way of travel is simply a path beaten down by animals and wagons. You can easily imagine what quag-

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mires these would become in wet weather; and, bad as they were, matters got much worse when the track, not leading to your destination, you cast off "across-country." Our progress was so slow that we hadn't negotiated four miles in six hours, although we worked hard, cleverly avoiding the marshy places, turning to the left or right, and getting on to deceptively firm ground, the crossing of which meant the burying of our gun in the "quicksands" of a bog. Of course each gun was drawn by a team of bullocks, our duty being to help them over the ruts. Traction engines out from home accompanied us for a short distance, but traction engines would have as much chance of getting round the left flank to Spion Kop in the rainy season as they would have of flying the Channel. The rear guard was now ordered to make a detour by Zietman's Farm with the naval guns, a manœuvre which got us on better ground, when we progressed more rapidly. Halted at Zietman's Farm for two hours to outspan oxen and feed, arriving in camp at Pretorious Farm about 6 p.m., having taken thirteen hours to complete an eight miles march.

January 11th.—At 4 a.m. a demonstration was made towards the river by Deal's Drift; a few Boers were seen on the opposite bank; Thorneycroft's Mounted Infantry reconnoitred to the riverside, but the infantry and guns did not get within range. On our return to camp heard that the cavalry brigade under Lord Dundonald had seized the heights on Mount Alice, overlooking Potgieter's Drift, on the Tugela, and Lyttleton's Brigade had been pushed on to hold same. On account of the difficulty of transporting the baggage and making sure that all was right at Colenso, and no sign of a counter move on the part of the Boers, a halt was made here for three days. The baggage, sunk all over the place in mud-coated confusion, would furnish splendid material for a picture entitled "STUCK." However, the delay masked the real in-

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tention of General Buller, which was to cross the Tugela with his main force at Trichardt's Drift. Napoleon's dictum—an army marched upon its stomach was never better illustrated than in this move round Spion Kop way. If Buller's army could live on rain it would be on top of Spion Kop twenty-four hours after leaving Colenso. Later on in the campaign, which was probably the severest in history, so far as marching went, and marching went very far, we discovered, too, that an army marched a good deal on its feet. Turn a man with good feet into a mealy patch for breakfast, dinner and tea and he will go further though faring worse than a man with bad ones fed like a prize fighter.

January 15th, 3 a.m.—Struck camp and marched to Springfield, distance about twelve miles. On this march the regiment forming "advanced guard" arrived early in camp. The regiments accompanying the baggage carts having to make a long detour to cross the Little Tugela at Springfield Bridge, were very late in turning up. A few miles to the east of Springfield is a long hill called Mount Alice. A few miles across the valley, and parallel to Mount Alice, are the whole of the positions occupied by the Boers in the second and third attempts to relieve Ladysmith, Doorn Kloof, Green Hill, Vaal Krantz, Bragfontein, and Spion Kop. Coming across from the Drakenberg Mountains in the west the Tugela flows through Mount Alice at Trichardt's Drift; then, sweeping round to the right, keeps along its base for about four miles to Potgieter's Drift, where it abruptly turns across towards Vaal Krantz at the other side of the valley. It was the heights of Mount Alice overlooking Potgieter's Drift which Dundonald's Cavalry seized, and it was at this same Drift a small party of South African Light Horse under Lieutenant Carlisle swam the river under fire and brought back the ferry boat. The seizure of the heights by Dundonald, the concentra-

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tion of Lyttleton's and Coke's Brigades at the Drift, the crossing over and feigned attack on any of the Boer positions from Vaal Krantz to Spion Kop were all noisy demonstrations meant to keep the Boers uncertain at what point the attack was to be delivered, and to screen as long as possible the crossing of the main force under General Buller at Trichardt's Drift.

January 16th, 4 p.m.—Our Brigade marched in an easterly direction, joining Warren's force under Mount Alice. As this movement was to be done as quickly as possible the baggage was cut down to the lowest scale. Three wagons were allotted to each regiment to carry everyone's topcoat and one day's ration. When on the march a day's ration was always carried in the haversack. The idea was for General Warren to establish himself on the heights of Mount Alice overlooking Trichardt's Drift. After joining Warren's force we marched under cover of the darkness about nine miles in the direction of Trichardt's Drift, arriving on the heights above the Drift about 1 a.m. on the morning of the 17th.

Boer Hymn Singing.

Spion Kop loomed up now directly opposite, a few miles across the valley, and its Boers occupants heralded our arrival with mournful hymn-singing, or it may have been their usual one o'clock in the morning biblical parade. Commencing soon after our arrival, the words in Dutch and the tune floating weirdly across the valley, caused a momentary commotion in our bivouac, everyone imagining it was the preliminary to attack—a dreamy dawn of day idea.

Judging Distance in Africa.

You may not imagine it possible to hear people singing a few miles away. In South Africa, on account of the rarified air, judging distance is very

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deceptive. Take an object two miles aloof, and let anyone just arrived in the country "judge distance" on it, and to a certainty eight hundred and eighty yards would form the strangers' "flat." Listening to sound he would work out the distance of its emanation in about the same ratio. At the battle of Wagon Hill the rifle fire could be heard distinctly at Colenso, a place eighteen miles south of Ladysmith. Imagine hearing rifle fire eighteen miles away in England!

D and H Companies reconnoitred towards the Drift at dawn, and reported all clear. We could now see the towering Spion Kop straight across the valley. Towards the right it seemed to go up like a wall, but on the left, though sloping tortuously, looked accessible. It was this side the 2nd Lancashire Fusiliers, six Companies of the 2nd Royal Lancasters, two of the 1st South Lancashire, 180 of Thornycroft's, and half a company of Sappers negotiated, in their gallant but ill-fated seizure of the kopjes narrow crest. The force now descended to the Drift, and the Royal Engineers, assisted by the Devon Regiment, placed a pontoon bridge across the Tugela. A pontoon bridge is simply made, at least the making of it is simply illustrated. The required number of pontoons, or flat-bottom boats, are anchored about twelve feet apart across the river, with bows, pointing up stream. Across these are placed baulks acting as road-bearers, and over the latter planks, technically called "chesses," which complete the impromptu bridge.

Four Cheeky Boers.

A small party of mounted men who swam the river to reconnoitre were fired on by four Boers from a wood-girt farm-house, under the shadow of Spion Kop, 1,700 yards away. After the cavalry troop had precipitously retreated, the four cheeky Boers turned

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on the men carrying planks towards the river for the construction of the bridge, killing one of the Devons. H company of the West Yorks firing long range volleys from the banks of the Tugela into the wood, and the artillery on Mount Alice shelling it, the four cheeky Boers galloped out, disappearing like phantom figures up the slopes of Spion Kop. B, D, E, and F, Companies of the West Yorks were then ferried across the river, and occupied positions for the protection of the bridge building engineers. The shells exploding in the wood made a terrific row, whilst every echo of the hill, o'er which the Boers were fleeing, paid back the cannons' bellow, and the rifles' bark. This little "affair" was a splendid illustration of what can be done by a few men using modern rifles and smokeless powder. Imagine four men defending a farm-house surrounded by a wood, and a company of infantry unsupported by artillery advancing against them over an open space of 1,700 yards. Consider those four unseen riflemen firing with deliberate aim at the approaching infantry—well, they would inflict punishment out of all proportion to what they could possibly receive before quitting the habitation. Going by the flanks to surround them, the chances are you would run into another smokeless party. Its no wonder Buller moved cautiously after crossing the Tugela at Trichardt's Drift. The greatest soldier, the greatest critic, the greatest fool would behave similarly when coming into contact with a hidden foe using smokeless powder; each would move cautiously.

Jap v. Boer.

The Japs behaved differently in their first battle with the Russians after crossing the Yalu River. With all respect for the Russian and the Jap, when General Buller crossed the Tugela he came in contact with a man who forgot more about fighting than both of them ever knew, or will ever know. When the

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Japs crossed the Yalu they could see the Russians in the trenches, and were able to shell exactly the occupied positions. If a Japanese army in the same strength as Buller's crossed the Tugela and behaved similarly to what it did after fording the Yalu, its sallow-faced soldiers would have no necessity to commit "Kari-kari," the Boers would save them all that trouble.

General Hildyard and The Writer. Thoughts of Little Ross.

As our half battalion was marching down to get ferried over the river General Hildyard "fell" me out to take charge of Carl Trigaarde's farm house and allow no one enter. This Boer habitation was situated on the road, a short distance from the Drift. While on duty here the Irish Brigade went by—it was after Colenso, and they swung past with a sort of suppressed swagger—the Dublin Fusiliers advancing as if marching to the tune, "What do you think of the Dublin's now?" In the evening the Lancashire Brigade relieved the half battalion of the West Yorks, who then took up position in the wood, whence the snipers fired, and where I joined them after being relieved from duty on the farm-house, having crossed the Tugela as an "INDEPENDENT COMMAND." When fording the bloody river shadowed by savage kopjes, and savage guns, my mind in seeking a scene directly contra to the treacherous surroundings, alighted upon the sombre features of an Irish village, *i.e.*, a huddle of dear old houses, midst a huddle of Carbery knolls.

The wood bore traces of the recent bombardment; several branches of trees which had been blown off were strewn about, but the farm-house miraculously escaped destruction; the only damage it received occurred to the left chimney, the latter being cleanly knocked off as if severed by a knife.

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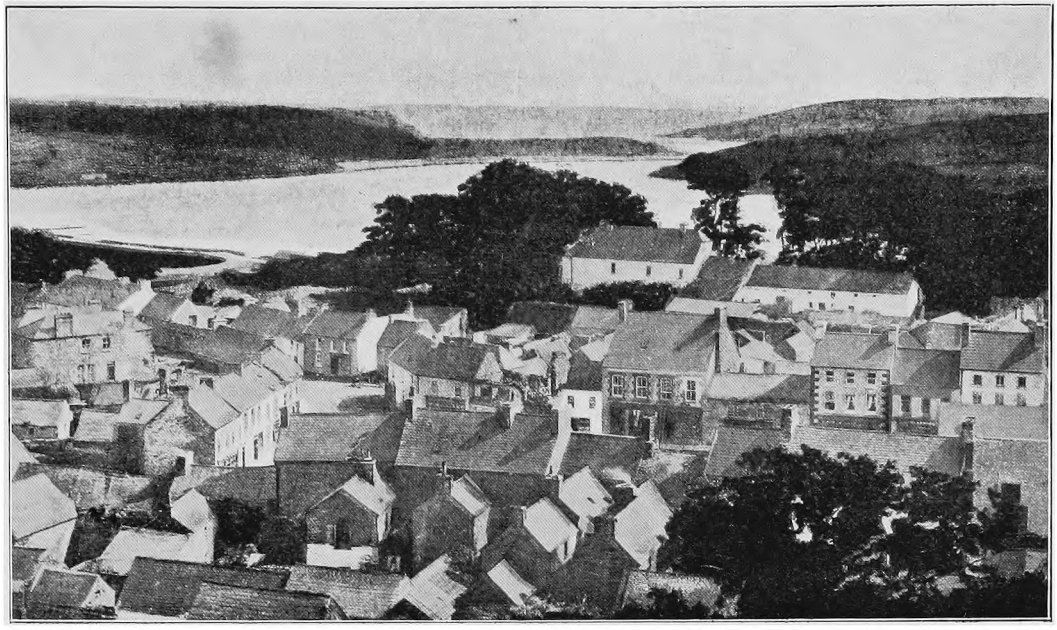
The sombre scene, to which my eyes flew back when crossing the Tugela.



A huddle of dear old houses, 'midst a huddle of dear old hills.

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The Tugela, on passing Mount Alice, runs only for a short distance across the valley, when it turns abruptly to the right and flows down towards Potgieter's Drift. Trichardt's Drift crosses the river just as it leaves Mount Alice; and it was over this "shallow" the pontoon bridge was thrown. A Drift is a place where the banks are low, and a rough roadway cut through them enables traffic to pass over in the dry season. Crossing by the pontoon bridge the valley is straight ahead with Mount Alice on the left and Spion Kop on the right.

January 18th.—Baggage and artillery, with the exception of some long-range guns left on Mount Alice, crossed the river at dusk.

January 19th.—Marched to Venter's Drift straight ahead up the valley, leaving Spion Kop on the right. On arriving at the Drift the West Yorks, who formed the "advanced guard," were ordered to make a road over it and across a shoulder of a hill on the other side. The regiment was much complimented by the Engineers on the construction of the road, christened YORK ROAD. After crossing we advanced about two miles in the direction of Acton Holmes. Halted here during the day while Dundonald's cavalry reconnoitred in the direction of Acton Holmes.

A Sad Scene.

A strong Boer patrol rode into an ambuscade of the irregular mounted men, thirteen of the former being killed and wounded, including the Heilbron Field-Cornet De Ments, and twenty-four prisoners taken. Two killed and two wounded were the losses among the mounted men. De Ments, a tall, elderly man with acquiline nose, and finely chiselled features, bled to death clutching his wife's letter in his left hand, long after his right had dropped the rifle. In death, as in his last moments, he held it closely to his side, and

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they bore him from the field of strife with the epistle of love tightly gripped between his fingers. Close by, a seventeen year old lad with flaxen hair and girlish face, lay dead across his Mauser. In the evening the force re-crossed the Drift, bivouacking by the side of Venter's Spruit. This manœuvre—the advance on Acton Holmes, as if we meant to go round that way, and the construction of York Road —were blinds to cover the real attack on the left of Spion Kop.

Spion Kop Ablaze.

For the last two days Spion Kop was subjected to a terrific bombardment from sixty guns. The grass being very long at this time, and as dry as "tinder," was quickly ignited by the exploding shells.

Then slowly, but surely, the bold kopje grew a ruddy comb, the latter increasing in colour and blaze, till vast columns of scarlet flame, and inky smoke rolled skywards. From this majestic flare-up arrows of golden light pierced every height and hollow, throwing into bold relief the scraggy profiles of the surrounding mountains. This awesome display continued far into the night, and resembled the eruption of a huge volcano.

January 20th. The Lancashire Brigade and Hart's Irish Brigade advanced on enemies' position, Hart's Brigade taking the extreme left of the Kop, and the Lancashire Brigade capturing Rangeworthy on its immediate left. The Boers retired in a half-right direction across the plateau, always keeping within the extreme range of the rifle. They, however, permanently settled down when the Irish and Lancashire Brigades halted, the latter not deeming it advisable to venture too far across the plateau unsupported by artillery. Both brigades had gained the near end of the ridge. At 5 p.m. the West Yorks moved up in support of Hart's Brigade, prolonging the line to the left. When scaling the

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bosom of the kopje the regiment came under a non-damaging shell fire, though D Company had a very narrow shave—a shrapnell bursting on the ground in front of the right hand man. The discharged bullets swept along the whole length of the company in line, and between it and Captain Mansel Jones in command, who was marching not a dozen feet in front. This missile was actually one of our own shells captured by the burghers at Colenso. The Boer gunners, not versed in the setting of the "time fuse," the latter frequently frustrated their "Rooinek" slaying designs, by creating a harmless aerial blast. Eventually they adopted the method of bursting on the ground by concussion.

Not quite as satisfactory a way (except to the enemy) as exploding the shell with a time fuse a little above and in front of the aimed at target. Spion Kop takes its name from the high ridge running along the valley through which the Tugela, meanders. Before ascending Rangeworthy you will pass a sloping hollow on the immediate left of where Spion Kop comes abruptly down; and on ascending the rather steep sides of the hill in front, you will be on Rangeworthy.

Standing on Rangeworthy and looking to your rear you will see, a few hundred yards away, the commencement of Spion Kop rising rather abruptly from your plateau. Turn about facing Ladysmith, a few hundred yards in front, the hill going down to the plain was of course unoccupied. Across the plateau on your right front on gently rising ground and somewhat long range rifle-fire loomed the Boer main position barring the way to Ladysmith. If the plateau were turned into a race course, Spion Kop would make a magnificent natural GRAND STAND. The West Yorks had their right resting at the base of Spion Kop range, and here in the very wet night every man built for himself a sangar of stones with

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front and side walls, and lived as it were in "his own castle." The old saying:—"Every man's house is his castle," had never a better illustration than in Tommy's sangar; and the most drastic Land Bill passed by the House of Commons and slung out by the House of Lords could not evict him. From the beginning the West Yorks were capital fellows to make cover, *i.e.*, for other chaps to hide in. At Willow Grange there was only time to make provisional frontal protection. At Frere where there was no fighting the trenches were half moon shape. At Rangeworthy we had a front and two complete sides; and ever afterwards with the least possibility of the enemy getting round, the trench described a semi-circle. We went all over Wagon Hill where the sangars remained standing, exactly as they were during the siege of Ladysmith, and I can honestly say the sangars of the West Yorks built the first night on Rangeworthy were quite as good as the ones on Wagon Hill, used for months, and moulded in a permanent concrete manner.

In his youth Colonel Kitchener was surrounded by majestic mountains and majestic fighting men, the Macgillicuddy Reeks and the "KERRY MOONLIGHTERS." On arriving in South Africa the possibilities of the man in corduroy-breeches roaming with gun in hand through Killarney's Lakes and Fells, never left his memory, consequently the elaborate sangars for the man in khaki roaming through Kruger's kopjes.

January 21st. The Boers commenced firing at daybreak when the regiment was reinforced by the Inniskilling Fusiliers, the Border, and Surrey Regiments. An advance was made towards the enemy's position; but it was found perfectly impossible to get on, as an absolutely open glacis led up to their entrenchments and a general retirement took place. A section of E Company under Lieutenant Boyall made a gallant, though rather foolish attempt, to

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reach the Boer trenches, getting to within 500 yards when they were unable to retire until darkness concealed their tracks. The battalion taking up its original position in the sangars, the other regiments retired through our tiny forts.

"Fighting" Hart.

A dapper officer marched at the head of the leading regiment, and when about 100 yards from us a man in the ranks immediately in rear of him doubled into my sangar kneeling down behind its crest. In a moment the dapper officer was on his heels, and waving his hand back towards his regiment, called out:—"Come out of there, double back and join your Company." As he got up to comply with the order, I said to him sympathetically:—Your colonel is rather severe; turning to me he barked, "colonel be damned man, don't you know who he is—he is 'Fighting' Hart;" and I knew, for the first time, the famous Major-General Hart, commanding the Irish Brigade. On this day the average number of rounds fired per man in the regiment was 300, and the Maxim Gun fired 7,500.

CASUALITIES.

KILLED.

Officer—Captain Ryall.

Men—No. 3917, Pte. Buckle, D.
3404, Pte. Owen, J.
5010, Pte. Crozier, G.
2679, Pte. Kershaw, E.
5364, Pte. Gascome, W.

2nd Lieut. Barlow and 42 men wounded. Casualties chiefly amongst G Company, under Captain Ryall, and one section of E Company under Lieut. Boyall, both of whom made gallant attempts to rush enemy's entrenchments.

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January 22nd—Firing commenced at daybreak. About mid-day the West Yorks retired to Venter's Spruit, a short distance across the valley, to protect the baggage and left rear of force. At 1.30 p.m. we joined, the firing line again at Sugar-Loaf Hill, the extreme left of Rangeworthy. The steep boulder-strewn sides of Rangeworthy made very rough climbing; the long grass completely hiding the smaller boulders, you felt your way like a bather wading through a water-covered rocky beach. By this move we relieved the 2nd Devons. Though firing continued heavily until nightfall the regiment protected itself so well with *sangars* there were no casualties.

January 24th—The position was so strengthened during the night that, although firing continued all day, only one man was wounded. The situation now was as follows:—We had made our position impregnable to rifle fire. On our right front across the plateau, between 1,200 and 1,800 yards away, the Boers had done likewise, so from day light till dark a continual sheet of lead passed between the two forces. Sit tight in your SANGAR and you were as safe as if the rifle fire were a thousand miles aloof. What was the good then of exposing yourself to fire at all. Well, the fighting instinct that could not sit still and listen to the pings of passing bullets must give back tit for tat to the enemy, so a stream of lead spat and hissed across the valley incessantly. Guns, even if they could be got up the steep sides of Rangeworthy—which is very doubtful—would, from their cramped position, be terribly handicapped. The Boers were never able to bring a big gun close IN enough on our right to enfilade us. At Gun Hill, in front of Spion Kop, there were in position the 78th, 7th, 73rd and 63rd Field Batteries. At the foot of Rangeworthy the 61st Howitzer Battery and the naval guns on Mount Alice, and though their whole fire was unaimed, Spion Kop a dozen times higher than Gun Hill, and also higher than Mount

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Alice, crowding out the view beyond, still it was sufficiently dangerous to keep the Boer guns at a respectful distance.

The Regimental "Dixies" Under Fire.

On the first day on Rangeworthy, our Maxim was shelled by Boer guns in position on the same hill. Occasionally a pom-pom stole in towards Spion Kop, rattling some of its tiny shells among the cooks fuming and fussing about 3,000 yards below the firing line. On one occasion the company chefs of one of the Lancashire regiments having made the tea, lined out the aroma laden camp kettles for heart invigorating distribution. Suddenly a belt of pom-pom shells broke up their neat formation, and instead of being "groused" at were loudly cheered for the pot upsetting performance which set the cooks cooking less congenial "stew." Out to our front on the plain, the Boers had a gun mounted which gave us unremitting attention. However, as we were invisible, its fire being unaimed, proved most erratic; 90 per cent. of the shells exploding on Spion Kop ridge to our rear. When we first arrived on Rangeworthy we were bereft of all confidence, but like the Connaught Ranger, who lost his appetite and found a Connaught Robber's, we soon recovered our Boer burgling teeth. We did not certainly succeed in marching across an open glacis and turning the Boers out of their positions; but then they never even made an attempt to come across to us; we held them easily. If the Boers had developed insanity, taking the form of a delusion that they could rush across the open and capture our sangars — well, before 100 yards had been covered, their delusion would get blown away. Yes, and before they had negotiated one half the distance they, themselves would follow suit. If you are ever in the firing line

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at long range, keep there unless much better cover can be secured in rear. At Rangeworthy, at times, half companies relieved one another; and before shelters were built for men resting in rear, you were much safer in the firing line.

General "Cover."

Rifle fire is the best civilizer in the world; the "bounder" who thinks he is somebody comes out of it a most gentlemanly fellow. You would learn more of the art of taking cover in five minutes on Rangeworthy than you would in five years continuous manœuvres at Aldershot. Some people have a positive genius for taking cover. Luckily there are few, very few, capable of emulating the tactics of the hedgehog, a display of whose recluse characteristics enabled some men to serve under General "Cover" throughout the South African campaign.

Blarney Castle on the Veldt.

Four or five of us clubbed together and built a most elaborate sangar; they said it was a miniature representation in front of the "Tower of London," in rere of Fingal's Cave, "but in a spirit of contradiction they called it Blarney Castle, and into it crept every day Colonel Kitchener commanding the regiment, and Captain Mansel Jones commanding D Company. You may think it strange that a Colonel commanding a regiment and a Captain commanding a company should creep; but you must remember no one walked on Rangeworthy, every one crept on all fours. If Mr. Pickwick could have seen us from a safe distance he would be delighted, being sure to conclude that we were all "antiquarians" looking for "fossilized stones." The orderly men trotted down to the cook-house on "all fours," resembling short-legged, broad-backed cats. When returning

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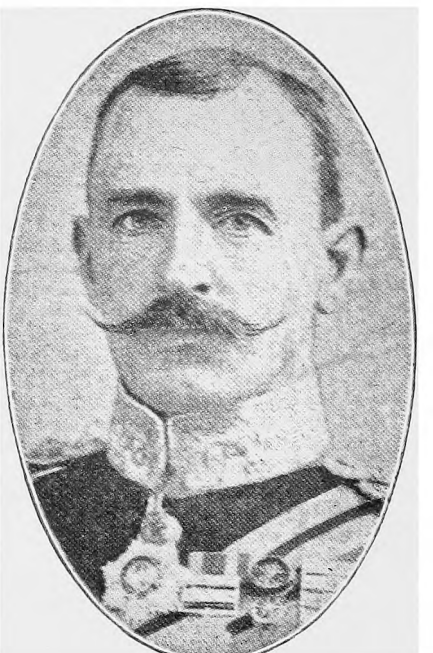
THE CHIEF OF THE "OLD BRIGADE."



COLONEL KITCHENER.

The man for whom we built Blarney Castle.

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with the camp kettles they crawled forward for some yards, then rested, and on again, looking like so many huge felines playing with gigantic mice. Colonel Kitchener and Captain Mansel Jones on entering "Blarney Castle," used to discuss the situation in the following terms:—Colonel Kitchener, "We are doing no good here." Captain Mansel Jones—"Anyway we're frightening them," Colonel. Colonel Kitchener—"The devil a fear; you would lie down here until the Lord called on you, and they would lie down over there until the Lord too had called on them. If I had my way I would rush across that open and get, if not to Ladysmith, to Heaven anyway." Captain Mansel Jones—"And I would do my best not to be far behind as your sky-pilot led you aloft." Then with eye-somersaulting devotion the audience offered up an humble prayer, that when the train of their eternal journey arrived at the changing station for heaven,—PURGATORY—they as "Black Protestants" would not be curtly ordered to keep their seats. Incidentally it may be remarked that the crouching attitude referred to was necessitated by the continuous stream of lead passing over head, luckily high, resembling the flight of a flock of sparrows skirting a garden hedge. Occasionally some came down and the shout went up—pass the word for the stretcher-bearers. The civilian stretcher-corps located a few hundred yards down the hill approached the wounded man in the firing line or out of it carrying a large white flag with a red cross in the centre. There were four bearers to a stretcher, and a leader who carried the flag. The flag, though meant as a signal to the enemy to cease fire, had always an opposite effect. The Boers looked on the native civilian stretcher-bearer as a renegade, and if they ever loved their fellow-man, the latter was not the "wheeler" who performed our ambulance work. The devil never hated holy water with half the intensity the

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Boers hated the civilian stretcher-bearer. On one occasion on Rangeworthy, three out of four native ambulance men were deliberately potted by the bewhiskered fighters of the veldt. Getting wounded soldiers away is, and always will be, a difficult puzzle where quick-firing rifles are engaged. It is indeed a ticklish job for any one to come near or for comrades to get up and essay the charitable task.

Of course no one expects an enemy to cease firing while wounded men are being bundled to the rear. Every man has a packet containing field dressing, sewn up in his jacket, but often the assistance of a doctor is required. Duty was very severe on Rangeworthy. You must remember the enemy was well within rifle-range, and that between us no natural barrier—a foaming river intervened. While on the hill no one dare "doff" his straps, for at any moment the Boers might deliver a whirlwind attack. Outpost at night was very trying, sentries crouching tiger-like outside each crude trench. At this time there were no safety catches on the rifles to enable you to lock the loaded magazine, and then fire by a simultaneous pressure of the clasp and trigger. From the latter method you received much satisfaction, being assured that, despite the enemies quickest exploit, your lightening-like alarm would arouse and safeguard the camp. A sentry on outpost in possession of a rifle without the safety catch, will, however, place a cartridge quietly in the chamber, and feel happier though he runs a grave risk. As a remedy for turning grey hair dark never recommend sentry duty on the wrong side of a sangar on a foggy night within rifle-range of a lion-hunting enemy. It speaks volumes for the steadiness of the troops that during the six nights on Rangeworthy, passed, as a rule, in rain and fog, not a single shot was fired in alarm, though the Boer sentries kept popping off, and you often heard a bullet ploughing its lonely furrow through the gloom

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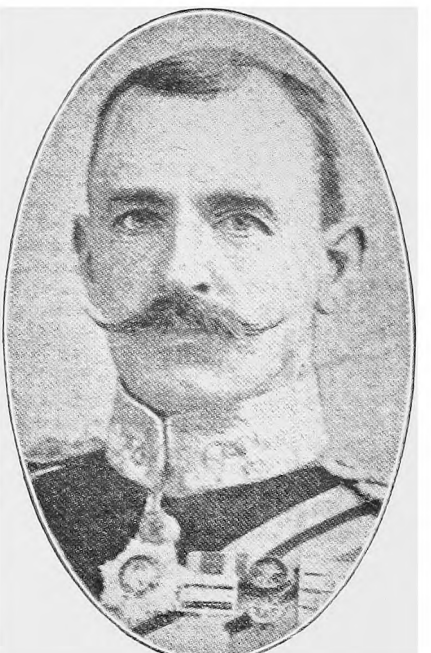
THE CHIEF OF THE "OLD BRIGADE."



COLONEL KITCHENER.

The man for whom we built Blarney Castle.

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overhead. Shelters were built for men resting in rear of the firing line as a protection from dropping bullets, and everything made as snug as possible. If Ladysmith had not to be relieved we could beat the Boers in a game of loafing, as we were much the richer side. Colonel Kitchener's remark now thoroughly weighed up the situation: — "We're doing no good here," and it was determined, if possible, to capture Spion Kop. At this time Spion Kop, that is the high ridge at our end, was not occupied by the Boers; our artillery with an unaimed fire from Gun Hill at its base, and Mount Alice across the valley making it untenable. At the same time the Boer artillery at the other end of the hill made it untenable for our infantry. It was then practically neutral ground. If it were possible for our artillery to get in position on its crest, it would from that point of vantage, dominate the Boer positions and all was over.

Scaling the Ill-fated Summit of Spion Kop.

We were only aware of the intention to send an expedition on Spion Kop when the two infantry regiments selected, the 2nd Lancashire Fusiliers and the 2nd Lancasters, were withdrawn off Rangeworthy.

January, 25th.—On a dark, drizzling night, with magazines uncharged the party stole up the steep side of Spion Kop from the valley of the Tugela —a severe climb of 2,000 feet. During the soldiers sleuthhound-like progress, the grease exuding shroud of night seemed bathing the veldt in the clammy vapour of the graveyard. Standing to arms, 'neath dripping great coats, we watched for the fire-flames of the deadly Mauser to illumine the hill, but no rifle barked from base to summit. At last, sounds of scuffling feet followed by hoarse commands came through the grimy atmosphere. Then, a resounding cheer rolling from aloft, proclaimed that Tommy Atkins had captured Spion Kop with the

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bayonet. Once again, however, he was destined to pay the penalty of matchless heroism, and pig-headed strategy. The following day we heard the enemy's shell-fire from five big guns and two pom-poms, and knew our party on Spion Kop were going through the worst ordeal of war, lying down under shell-fire and having no means of retaliation, a feeling of helplessness akin to getting kicked while bound hand and foot. The regiment had one connecting link with Spion Kop. It was Lance Corporal Goodyear of the West Yorks regimental signallers attached for duty to the party who flashed down the much debated message from Thorneycroft to General Buller for which he received the Distinguished Conduct Medal.

January 26th.—About mid-day A, B, E, G companies of the West Yorks, under command of Major Fry, were withdrawn to a position about one mile in rear to be ready if necessary.

A never to be forgotten Mid-night Retreat.

Between 8 and 9 o'clock on a miserable wet, dark night the retirement commenced under appalling difficulties. The East Surrey Regiment went a short distance on the ridge on our right and commenced firing volleys. This delusive demonstration led the Boers to believe a general attack was in progress when actually the remainder of our force was retiring. Whether the Boers retired later on during the night, it is very certain they had not done so when we marched off; for in answer to volleys of the East Surrey Regiment we could hear distinctly their well-known independent rifle work. Precautions had been taken at dusk to place men at twenty-five yards interval along the line of retreat which greatly facilitated matters.

No one on Rangeworthy blamed General Buller for retiring, in fact no one said anything at all about it.

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Day after day the troops were expecting the order to advance, and almost every subject on earth was discussed but the one you would imagine affected the rank and file most, not even a sporting chance was hazarded as to whether it was possible to get over the intervening space separating Briton from Boer, and so it is in all similar cases the people most concerned "sing-dumb." Looking back now it would have been criminal to hurl troops across the open glacis unsupported by artillery. People say Napoleon would have slogged his way through. Napoleon was always able to see his enemies. Luckily for him he never came in contact with an invisible foe using smokeless powder; if he had, there would not be quite so many verses in "THE BONNY BUNCH OF ROSES O." Having tumbled over the grass-covered boulders down the steep sides of Rangeworthy, we re-formed at the bottom retiring in sections of fours like regiments route marching. The blinding rain and pitchy atmosphere rendered it impossible to discern the men put out as "points" at 25 yards interval who had to guide the leading regiment towards them by calling out "this way, this way." then joining the ranks as it went by. The retirement was as difficult a bit of marching as the hardest veteran wouldn't wish for. The ground was sodden and slippy, and the retreat a continual tumble and slide. We tumbled into drifts and scrambled out again. We tumbled into Dongas and clambered out again. We tumbled into spruits and waded out again. We tumbled on the ground and "footsacked" on again. We cursed the Boers, the country and the devil, and in the morning we tumbled across the pontoon bridge in about as exhausted a condition as ever we will be in our lives. We halted immediately on getting over the Tugela; coffee was made and each man served out with a peg of rum. When the fiery fluid had "cried" to Tommy, "Buck up Old Man," some of us Irish fellows sang, Faugh-

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A-Matughe-. -Maratharsha, as if the fright of God had never been in our hearts. Then each Tommy laughingly exaggerating his late misfortunes, the tumble into a spruit as if he had fallen over Shakespeares Cliff, illustrating his wade out with the fussiness of a hero who had completed the swim to France across the channel.

Vallette Embellishes The Dictionary.

Whenever possible a peg of rum was issued to each man during the campaign; every one in the Company, from the Colour-Sergeant down, drinking it in presence of the Company Officer, the surplus remaining after the regulation issue being distributed according to the humour or "persnikitiveness" of the latter. "Persnikitive," a most adaptable word coined and patented by Colour-Sergeant Valette, is applicable to any sort of humour, good, bad, or indifferent. If the officer, after the issue, was in a "persnikitive" mood, he either distributed the surplus to men who were never "backward in coming forward" when fiery fluid was floating about, or else turned the ladle "upside down" and bathed the centipedes and scorpions with the throat lubricating beverage. While at Standerton on the way up-country a blue ribbon officer in one of the Companies took pride in giving the scorpions and centipedes a royal douse of Tommy's beloved medicine. As this was not considered quite good enough a council of war was called, the finding of which ordered a small crock to be inserted in the ground lightly covered over by the grass, and close to where the aroma of the rum kettle set up a widespread lip-smacking. After the issue, the officer gave the order for the surplus to be pitched "over board" when he had the satisfaction of seeing it poured carefully into the hidden receptacle. When he had retired, rejoicing in the fact that he had been instrumental in a

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small way of discouraging drinking in the army, the "council of war" dived for the hidden treasure and drank the health of the departed teetotaler. Then with bacchanalian fervour, prayers were offered up that his enthusiasm for teetotalism would only prompt him to order the confiscation of the surplus rum, when Tommy had a crock cunningly set in the ground to save it for the centipedes, and scorpions of the 14th regiment.

Captain Jones's "Off You Pop" Order.

Captain Mansel Jones commanding D Company, big, bountiful and humorous, as good a Company officer as ever drew a sword, distributed his Company's surplus rum with the same tact as he did everything; he divided it amongst the most deserving men after all undesirables were dispersed by him with three magic words —"off you pop." Teetotalers at home would be sure to object to a rum issue; but you must never forget that 7,000 miles intervened between teetotalers at home and the men who often had to fight a rear guard action shirtless, foodless and bedless, in South Africa. Having rested here for a few hours we continued our march over Mount Alice, settling down about six miles further on at a place called Spearman's Hollow where we "lived" under canvas until the third attempt to relieve Ladysmith was initiated. At this time, when on the right side of the Tugela, every one stopped in tents with the exception of the men on outpost. While the water separated the two armies it was considered safe to live under canvas. On crossing the Tugela, however, "dressing robes and bungalows" were left behind, and once more lean Tommy found himself on the lean veldt, bereft of everything save the stout heart of a British soldier. After the relief of Ladysmith tents were only used by regiments resting inside the permanent forts or trenches of places like

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Johannesburg, Pretoria, Standerton, &c. The West Yorks left Standerton to participate in a trek after De Wet on the 8th August, 1900, going by train to Welverdeend on the Johannesburg Potchefstroom Railway, marching from there by Magado's Pass, Rustenburg, and Commando Nek to Pretoria, bivouacking on the latter's racecourse on August 25, and staying there for two days. While here the following letter was received from General Hamilton:—

"MY DEAR FRY,

"I did not have a chance of saying a few words to your regiment before you left for I was away the previous day, and the railway station was not a good place for me to say what I wanted.

"Will you please let all the regiment know how sorry I am to lose them out of my Brigade. I have known the West Yorkshires long enough now to appreciate the good stuff there is in them, and I can truly say I don't wish to have a better regiment on service.

"With me, I have always had a feeling that the West Yorkshires could be relied on to do whatever they were asked to do. I don't give up all hope of seeing you in the Brigade again, although I fear we are stuck here for the present.

"We may be relieved by some other troops from the Orange River Colony. No one will be better pleased than I to welcome you back should we get into Pretoria; in the meantime I wish you all success.

"Yours sincerely,

"E. S. HAMILTON."

The Ambush and Slaughter in Buffel's Poort Pass.

August 27th.—The regiment left for Belfast, Northern Transvaal, to take part in connection with General Buller's advance towards the frontier, returning to Pretoria on September 24th.

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September 27th.—The regiment again left Pretoria on a five days march to Rustenburg from where two companies with two guns and a party of mounted scouts were kept continually on the move fetching up convoys from a place called Rietfontein, sixteen miles outside Pretoria. It was while on this duty, December 3rd, that the convoy consisting of 120 waggons escorted by B and F Companies was attacked whilst entering a formidable pass, called Buffel's Poort, 20 miles from Rustenburg, by Delaray's Commando. A kopje was seized and held by our men, and the two guns of the Royal Horse Artillery, but the Boers keeping up an incessant fusilade, they were only able to save six wagons. Through the kopjes in the pass masking the remaining 114 the Boers after feasting on their contents made a Majuba-Day bonfire of their structural portions. The regiments' casualties were 10 killed and 13 wounded. Two other sections of the convoy, escorted by two Companies of the Argyle and Sutherland Highlanders, being some distance in rear luckily had not entered the pass. On hearing the firing they laagered the wagons out on the plain, dug trenches around them, and thereby escaped a red-hot introduction to "Beelzebub."

January 19th, 1900.—The regiment returned to Pretoria on this date, and on the following day left by train for Wonderfontein to take part in the Eastern Transvaal trek in one of the columns under Major-General Smith-Dorrien, and under the supreme command of General French. On the breaking up of General Smith-Dorrien's force on the 1st of May, the following orders were issued by him and Colonel Spens who had taken over command of the brigade on the promotion of Major-General Smith-Dorrien.

Force Orders, No. 4 of 28-4-'01.

"It is now over three months since Smith-Dorrien's Force started on the last operations. Never had troops greater hardships to undergo, and undergone

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them with greater cheerfulness. Night outposts have been especially heavy, so much that it has been necessary to use the Mounted Troops equally with the Infantry. As the composition of Smith-Dorrein's Force is likely to be changed before it again moves, the Major-General in command takes this opportunity of thanking all ranks most warmly for the hearty way they have worked for him, and it will give him much pleasure to bring to General-Commanding-in-Chief the excellent work done by all units and by individuals. He feels that his promotion to the rank of Major-General, which Lord Kitchener has just announced, is a tribute to the way the Force has worked, and he hopes that many more will reap reward, which they have undoubtedly earned."

Brigade Order, No. 7 of 28-4-'01, on the breaking up of Spen's Brigade.

"The Brigadier wishes to thank all ranks of the Brigade for the excellent work they have done during the time he has had the honour to command them. The cheerful spirit shown by all during the period of exceptional hardships has been most noticeable, and in bidding them good-bye the Brigadier wishes them also God-speed. He will always remember, with pride, his associations with them, and trusts some day to have the honour to meet them again."

Nine months with the veldt for a bed and the sky for a counterpane.

From leaving Standerton on the 8th of August, 1900, until May the 1st, 1901, a period of nine months, the regiment was never under canvas, and with the exception of short terms at Rustenburg 'neath a rough shelter of corrugated iron, lived in the open through all seasons of the year. On the high veldt in winter when there is often a hard black frost at night, and the sun by day burns up the country, sleeping on the arid ground is not quite as soothing as cuddling by the banks of Allan Water, 'neath

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an eider-down quilt. Then in the summer or rainy season marching by day and sleeping in the long grass continually saturated with aqueous matter, is what makes the seat of a soldier's breeches look so empty, and the expression of his face so glum. During all this time no one suffered from cold, in fact was ever accused of sneezing though, strange to say, some men developed coughs the first night they slept in tents after nine months bivouacking a paradox the Medical Association may be able to explain. If the Boers ever had any intention of following up the retirement from Rangeworthy, a very unlikely idea, as they always seemed content when every one slided off, the darkness would baffle even an enemy possessed of a good deal of the cat's instinct for nocturnal escapades.

January 30th.—Major Watts, Captain Tew, and 2nd Lieutenant Fryes, with draft of 177 N.C.O,'s and men, joined from England. About this time most of the corps received reinforcements, the artillery being strengthened by a horse battery and a battery of 5-inch guns from Gibraltar, manned by Garrison Artillery Men. General Buller addressed the troops, thanking them for hardships undergone without a whimper, simultaneously announcing that he had found the key to Ladysmith. Though the General had found the key, the Boers had double-locked the hobble-skirt in which she was making such an ass of herself.

Vaal Krantz.

February 4th.—A third attempt was commenced on this date to relieve Ladysmith. Struck camp after Church Parade, battalion marching to neck of Mount Alice, overlooking Potgieter's Drift, and directly opposite to Vaal Krantz, where it bivouacked for the night.

February 5th.—Marched to the valley at the foot of the hill, and close to a low kop called Zwartz Kop,

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standing out a short distance from Mount Alice. As you look across the valley Spion Kop looms up on your left front, and running from the latter in a straight line for four miles, a collection of low hills, called Brackfontein, terminates in a rather small round knoll slightly higher than the Brackfontein collection titled Vaal Krantz. Imagine a gigantic lion lying on his breast with his head well up, the huge, out-of-all-proportion head—would represent Spion Kop, the low four miles long Brackfontein—the body; and the tabby end of the tail brought close in and held a few inches higher than the trunk would represent Vaal Krantz. As you look across the valley from Mount Alice, immediately where Vaal Krantz ends, a gap or natural roadway about a mile in breadth separates Vaal Krantz from a much higher hill, called Green Hill, which extends away to the right. On this Green Hill, and well to "starboard" as we looked at it, in a place called Doorn Kloof, the Boers had mounted a Long Tom (six-inch gun throwing a 100 lb shell). A kloof is a hollow between two hills. This particular one was high up from the valley, and looked just as if a huge horseshoe piece of ground were cut out of the hill's expansive breast. The original idea was to capture Vaal Krantz and Green Hill, but only Vaal Krantz was taken possession of, the capture of Green Hill, for some reason or other, falling through. In the morning a road was cut under the direction of Majors Findlay and Absley Smith to the crest of Zwartz Kop, and a mountain battery, two field guns, and six naval 12-pounders were slung up by steel hawsers, the ammunition being taken to the top by hand. It was determined to capture Vaal Krantz, and at 6 a.m. a terrific yet sham bombardment was opened on Brackfontein. After the artillery had operated for some time the Lancashire Brigade, supported by six batteries of Field Ordnance, one howitzer battery, and two 4-7 naval guns made a feint attack on Brack-

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fontein, the horse batteries accompanying them across the valley to get a closer shot at the position, and give the manœuvre every appearance of genuine strife. On coming within very effective range the artillery formed up and opened fire, the infantry skirmishing towards Brackfontein, and getting close enough to arouse the enemy's wrath retired, covered by the guns of the artillery. After the infantry had got well past, the artillery contingents withdrew alternately, six batteries covering the retirement of the seventh and so on.

78th Battery's Glorious Retreat.

On the artillery commencing to retreat the Boers unmasked some guns on their left near Spion Kop. Then, the Long Tom on Doorn Kloof giving them its undivided attention from the right, the retiring artillery came in for a very hot time, the 78th, the last battery to limber up receiving the concentrated fire of the whole Boer cannon. This battery seemed to bear a charmed existence, as shells burst all round it, kicking up such a cloud of dust that at times a gun or limber appeared like a shadowy form in a mist. If the retirement had been a show affair in the military tournament at the Agricultural Hall; the dust kicked up by the shells represented by some mechanical means it would not be one whit cooler or steadier than the retirement from Brakfontein, One limber which had all its horses shot down was dragged home by the gunners with apparently less concern, and certainly not one-fourth the hurry associated with soldiers parading the streets of London in the Lord Mayor's show. While the feint on Brakfontein was in progress a pontoon bridge was quickly thrown across the river at a place called Munger's Drift, exactly where the Tugela flows past Vaal Krantz. Three infantry brigades, Hart's, Hildyard's, and Lyttleton's had been massed at the foot of

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Mount Alice ready to be let slip on Vaal Krantz when the false attack had been sufficiently developed.

72 guns roaring at one time.

The whole of the guns, consisting of the batteries returned from the Brakfontein demonstration, the guns on Zwartz Kop and the guns on Mount Alice, altogether seventy-two pieces of artillery, were now switched on to little Vaal Krantz. Never in history was such a concentration of fire on so small an object. If the same number of racket players as guns could possibly act together in an ordinary racket court, they would not beat in snapping and incessant action the volleying on Vaal Krantz. The little hill was completely blotted out with the smoke of the bursting shells, and every living thing on it above ground from a man to a lizard injured. While the shelling of Vaal Krantz was in progress Lyttleton's Brigade streamed across the plain to attack it, led by the Durham Light Infantry, followed by the 1st Rifle Brigade with the Scottish and 3rd Rifles in support. The hill was taken of course with little opposition; and the brigade established itself by building sangars on the front and flanks facing the enemy.

Brilliant Boer Feat.

While Lyttelton's Brigade was advancing on Vaal Krantz, Viljeon, the Boer desperado in saving his gun from being cut off performed a feat of superb heroism. When the British line reached half way across the valley, what appeared to be a waggon hitched to riderless and stampeding horses tumbled down Vaal Krantz, reaching the bottom in an apparently collapsed condition. In a moment, however, the horses shot with the speed of affrighted deer straight across the face of Lyttleton's Brigade for the sheltering shoulder of Green Hill. Not a vestige of a riders face was to be seen, yet, whips were frantically crack-

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ing beside the pommels of the saddles, whilst a cannon bounded like a billow-tossed boat "abaft" the haunches of the horses. Instantaneously our artillerists trained their guns on the flying game, painting a picture never to be forgotten by those who looked to where Viljeon worked whip, spur and bridle. Shells burst to the right, to the left, short, and over, but the Boers undismayed, lashed and rode through fumes of green-eyed lyddite. Then when all proved futile helmets were doffed along the British line, and to a "view halloo" that would have fired the heart of fox-hunting John Peel, Viljeon and his gun "found ground" in Green Hill. The Long Tom on Doorn Kloof previously employed in shelling the artillery which accompanied the feint on Brakfontein (and sending an occasional shell amongst the infantry massed at the foot of Mount Alice) now gave Vaal Krantz its undivided attention. The distance from our battery of 5-inch Garrison Artillery guns at the foot of Mount Alice, the two 4·7's on top, and the Long Tom on Doorn Kloof was roughly a range of five miles. The Long Tom was fired as a disappearing gun not on a disappearing platform, but loaded out of sight and then run up on rails to the mouth of the kloof, discharged and run back again to be re-loaded. Though the distance to the Long Tom was five miles, it was well within the range of the two 4·7's and the battery of Garrison Artillery 5-inch guns throwing 50 lb. missiles. After the shelling of Vaal Krantz these guns gave the Long Tom their sole attention, bursting shells at the mouth of the kloof, when the gun was run up to fire, and over its shoulder when run back to re-load, everywhere in fact but actually on the gun which seemed to bear a charmed existence. At last after some hours shell fire a great wreath of smoke like a gigantic Prince of Wales feather was seen to rise from the kloof, and a tremendous cheer went up for every one knew a magazine had been exploded. What

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actually happened was revealed afterwards by Boers who were present with the gun. A shell (said by our people to be fired from one of the 5-inch pieces) landed in a mule waggon crammed with Long Tom shells exploding the lot, and according to our informants causing the death of five and the wounding of nineteen Burghers. This mishap to the ammunition put the Long Tom out of action for a few hours, but evidently having found some more "shell food" it again commenced operations.

February 6th.—Lyttleton's Brigade holding Vaal Krantz was the only change in affairs. The Boers were concentrating a pretty heavy shell fire on that position from a gun or two on the plain to its front, a few on the low hills near Spion Kop on the left, a few hidden away among the nooks of Green Hill on its right, and the Long Tom on Doorn Kloof. All these guns were out of sight from our gunners who, however, kept up a continual fire at every likely and unlikely place where it was possible there may be a gun in a position. Judging by the dust kicked up on Vaal Krantz, Lyttleton's Brigade was having a bad time of it. To every one, except the people on Vaal Krantz, the operations were a delightful outing, a magnificent display of fireworks as plainly visible as if the performance was illustrated in a theatre with the smoke from the Long Tom as a signal to continue the "fun." In all their big guns, with the exception of the Long Toms, the Boers used smokeless powder as in our monster "pieces." However, the black material, sacred to the "glorious, pious, and immortal" memory of poor Guy Fawkes, always fed Kruger's "steel-jawed lion." Thus you always knew when the Long Tom was speaking by the cloud of black smoke which hung lazily around its shell-vomiting throttle. A balloon tethered to the ground was let up every day while here to observe the enemy's movements. Another pontoon bridge was thrown over the river, near the position occupied by the one gallantly con-

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structed under fire the previous day by a party of Engineers instructed by Major Irvine. In the evening the English Brigade was ordered to relieve Lyttleton's Brigade on Vaal Krantz. The West Yorks marched across the valley with companies extended in single rank skirmishing order, intervals of about 100 yards between each company. On getting near the pontoon bridge we closed and filed over. A number of Engineers who had been engaged in the construction of the bridge were lying under shelter with their wounds bandaged. They said whilst engaged in this work a number of Boers crept through a mealy field close by and impudently chastised them.

West Yorks on Vaal Krantz. Terrible Ordeal.

After crossing the pontoon the brigade marched to Vaal Krantz which was only a few hundred yards away, lying down at the foot of the hill till darkness made further movements possible. The enemy's shell-fire ceased, but the pings of bullets coming from the front over the hill made one feel he had left the pic-nic party. At dark the brigade climbed the kopjes rugged side, and exchanged places with Lyttleton's. The men of the latter seemed to be very happy in saying good bye, and in wishing we could share the pleasure it left them in, thanked God for all His mercies, each man proclaiming aloud his intention of buying two Bibles on getting back to England. The brigade carried their wounded with them, not being able to shift the latter in the day time through the deadly shell-fire. All that night we strengthened the sangars taken over from Lyttleton's Brigade, the whole working time being punctuated by alarms and false alarms. On the plain in front the Boers had a trench from which they kept up an incessant but harmless fusilade. On one occasion bolder parties approached and actually opened fire from the foot of the hill, an attack luckily for them not pressed

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home. In this attack it was only possible to fire at the flashes of their rifles; nothing else being visible in the darkness, and strangely weird came those wicked battle signals across the inky night. After a very short time the flashes disappeared, and the harmless long range battue re-started. You were carrying a stone for the strengthening of the sangar, an alarm developed, you dropped the stone, crouched down on all fours and galloped to your sangar, unslung your rifle which was always carried when at work on the hill, and commenced firing. In the midst of one of those alarms when every one was trigger-pulling for all he was worth, and the officers whistles, were like startled curlews, screaming out the cease fire. Captain Mansel Jones said, "What can I do? I cannot make them stop, the devils take no notice of me, they are all mad, every one of them is stark staring mad." The above din would have been an exact replica of the roaring, whistling row created by the belching of guns midst flocks of affrighted sea birds, were it not for being minus the music of the sad sea waves. If ever there was method in madness it was there that night on Vaal Krantz—no confusion, but a grim determination that the hill would not be re-captured. One practical lesson was taught us by the result of this night's experience on Vaal Krantz. It is possible for troops holding a position at night with only a limited supply of ammunition and before getting thoroughly acclimatized, to expend it with little or no harm to the enemy, and find on the following day nothing left for the foe but surrender ale, *i.e.*, "Hand Up" beverage. Fortunately our supply of ammunition was unlimited. It takes six, probably twelve months campaigning to turn out the polished soldier, the man whom nothing would disturb, who would not show his hand at night if every hill around him suddenly developed into an active volcano. The South African campaign turned out a couple of hundred thousand of him, such

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as no campaign before ever did or no campaign again ever will.

February 7th.—In the morning we could see the lie of things. The West Yorks were occupying the right front and right flank of the hill next to the wide gap separating Vaal Krantz from Green Hill. If the attempt was successful it was through this opening the baggage would be passed on to Ladysmith. The regiment's position extended from the right to where a short neck connected it with a part of the hill out to the left front. The other regiments extending along this part round to the left flank of the position. We added considerably to the stone or boulder wall taken over from Lyttleton's Brigade, building in addition a thick flanking running back at very short intervals as a protection against flank missiles. We had seen the fire on the hill while in occupation of Lyttleton's Brigade, and in anticipation of what we were to endure, shaped our sangars like Old Nick's fire-proof battlements. The West Yorks worked during the night on Vaal Krantz as they never worked before; for they knew the most terrible foeman in the world was watching them—Long Tom of Doorn Kloof.

Hill Disemboweling Long Tom. Awesome Shell-Fire.

Just at dawn we got a reminder of what the day would be like, for a Long Tom shell planked down about twenty yards in rear of the wall occupied by the West Yorks. Thence till dark the shells from this gun dropped almost monotonously in the same place varying so little that one huge pit was formed in the ground as a result of the day's firing. The West Yorks occupying the right of Vaal Krantz, the part nearest Doorn Kloof, accounted for the Long Tom's undivided attention to the regiment. The part of Vaal Krantz defended by the West Yorks was very narrow on top, and the

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Long Tom shells dropped down in the centre about twenty yards in rear of the wall occupied by the battalion. When the shell struck it displaced and blew up a tremendous shower of broken rocks which were hurled a hundred feet in the air in a somewhat slanting direction, going out far enough to miss our sangar when returning to earth. The displacement of the rocks resembled the alarmed rising of a flock of mixed birds, in size from a thrush to an eagle with a hundred times more row, and at least fifty times more energy, This display, the humming impact of the 100 lb. shell, and the whirr of the displaced rocks was terribly magnificent and war; which if it were possible to illustrate in a theatre would, in more than one way, "bring down the house." All the shells were apparently solid as no smoke emanated from them. Occasionally, however, they appeared to get smashed in two, going up like blue-backed eagles midst the showers of screaming stones. During the whole day no one left his sangar, or attempted to stand up. Men took turn about, peeping through the loop-holes, looking out for a possible attack, crouching low like hunch-backed monkeys when the tell-tale smoke of a big gun met their sight. Then the warning cry—"Look out, here she comes," fell gratingly on the ear, on which everyone ran into his hole, *i.e.*, corner of sangar, pulling his tail in after him. From seeing the smoke, well over a minute elapsed before you heard a sound like the wobbling flight of a flock of large birds and the piercing whistle of a banshee. A few seconds later the wobbling flight became more regular, and the banshee's whistle grew into a scream. Then the humming impact on the ground set your sangar stones rocking, on which a scene looking exactly as if a solid house had been swept off its foundation, and in countless fragments blown up into the air met your gaze. You often heard the humming sound of a stone on the road thrown by

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a strong man; imagine then the row created by a 100 lb. shell striking at so great a speed as to become invisible. Besides the Long Tom the fire of several smaller guns was concentrated on the hill, in fact a larger number than were at Spion Kop, but with very different results. On account of the extended formation taken up along the edge of the kopje, the narrowness of Vaal Krantz allowing for only one trench accounted for the light casualty list. If a second trench ran twenty yards behind the one occupied by the West Yorks the Long Tom shells would make a good part of it untenable. If the hill were broad enough to have a trench the same distance in front, the dropping stones from the displacement would make the greater part of it untenable. If you are ever on a hill under shell fire keep to the outside entrenchments, artillery bombardments being mainly directed at the central zone. The left of Vaal Krantz jutting out more to the front, and being nearest the low hills, Spion Kop way came in for a rougher time of it from the smaller guns, especially two pom-poms. However, the West Yorks received a fair share from the field "pieces," though with little or no damage; the 14 pounder making a great contrast to the huge 100 pounder. Yet there were a few narrow shaves, and you now and then heard the cry—"Any one hurt there" as a shell placed an old Boer's "Sou-Wester" on a "square pushing" sangar's "Quiff."

The Hot Breath of a Passing Shell.

When a shell passes so close as to knock one of the top stones off your sangar, its hot breath strikes your cheek like the heat wave of a furnace. Then you offer a silent prayer for you know the "auctioneer's hammer" had nearly come down. Lord Wolseley says shell-fire is more demoralizing than damaging; exactly, you never get used to it. Rifle fire, unless it rains as it were, men get almost

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to ignore. A rifle bullet unless it strikes a vital part causes only a temporary disablement. Indeed, sometimes men get fed up and wish for a bullet through some non-vital part which would shunt them off the beaten track to the "ticket working" hospital of "Funkfontein." No soldier, however, cares to get hit with a shell, for it means another recruit for "Old Belzzebob." If a shell should hit your leg, its off; your shoulder, its off; your head, its off; consequently no one cares to go "square pushing" when shells are flying round. Retiring from a position on which the enemy are deliberately firing at the retreating troops, shell fire is a capital thing to make them keep their heads down or unsteady in gun manipulation. Water was passed down along the "ramparts" in buscuit tins, a man creeping out of each partition between the flanking walls and passing the tin around. Water, and plenty of it is most essential under fire; being under fire developes a thirst as nothing else in the world can. The Boers keeping well away, there was no rifle fire on this day at Vaal Krantz. It was noticeable while on here that the Boer shrapnell fire had greatly improved, a tree in the centre of the hill being badly knocked about.

A Pigeon in the Battle's Midst.

A dove cooed all day on a tree in rear of our position. At first the cooing was rather soothing; but after a while the monotonous coo and coolness of the bird got on your brain, and for months afterwards men who were on Vaal Krantz could not bear the coo of a dove, bringing back as it did a vivid recollection of the terrible kopje. By the capture of Vaal Krantz it was thought possible to outflank and roll up the Boer positions on Brakfontein and Spion Kop on its left; but this was simply impossible without holding Green Hill on the right also. When on manœuvres about here after the campaign was over we

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marched through the open space between Green Hill and Vaal Krantz. This open space is one of the natural roadways called Nek's, or Poorts, or Passes, occurring at intervals through the hills in this country, and extends a mile wide between Green Hill and Vaal Krantz. If you walk from Mount Alice through this open space Ladysmith is on your left front ; Green Hill running straight out to your right. Along the base of the latter, for two or three miles, were a lot of broad leafed bushes, each completely screening a Boer trench, forming unsurpassable obstacles if allowed to be held. It was observed from the balloon that the Boers were bringing up re-inforcements of guns from Ladysmith, and the general retirement was ordered in consequence. It was a great relief when darkness put an end to the shell-fire. On account of the extended position in single line held by the regiment its casualties were very light: it was the uncertainty that made things so uncomfortable. The Long Tom's shells scarcely varied, the gunners were certainly magnificent shots, dropping nearly all their shells into the large grave-like hole blown out of the hill ; but then you never knew where the shell may strike. You saw the smoke, and knew the gun had been fired. After a bit you heard the shell thundering along ; if the aim were true as usual it would find its bed in the same dug out, but, then you could never make sure ; it may land on top of your head. This uncertainty makes shell-fire very disagreeable, then Vaal Krantz was composed of one mass of broken rocks which shells seemed to revel in playing skittles with. Considering the number of flying stones, the casualties were marvellously few. Luck apart, this small casualty list of the West Yorks was attributable to their own exertions in building elaborate sangars the night before. If any one of the West Yorks present on Vaal Krantz ever became the world's most famous architect, the contemplation of

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the most beautiful building designed by him would not give him one hundredth part of the satisfaction derived from the knowledge that he did more than his best to strengthen the rough sangars on Vaal Krantz. If the Germans, in a contemplated invasion of England, had seized and occupied the Isle of Wight, it would be about as useful to them as the seizure and occupation of Vaal Krantz was to General Buller in the Relief of Ladysmith. However, the occupation of the Isle of Wight would have one advantage, it would be a capital electioneering exploit.

Casualties :—2nd Lieutenant Bicknel and twelve men wounded. At 9 a.m. the brigade retired off Vaal Krantz ; every one being delighted on leaving a place where they spent the ratiest night and the rottenest day of their lives. The retirement was continued over the Tugela, the brigade bivouacking for the night in front of Zwartz Kop.

February 8th.—At 4 a.m., the force again trekked over Mount Alice; the Long Tom on Doorn Kloof firing ineffectually a number of rounds at least equal to a royal salute. Halted for two days at Springfield.

February 10th.—At 5 a.m., marched to Pretorious Farm.

February 11th.—At 3 a.m., marched to Chieveley, pitching camp near Blaaukrantz River.

Tugela Heights.

February 14th.—The fourth and successful effort to relieve Ladysmith was started on this date. A few miles straight in front of our camp, at Blaaukrantz River, near Chieveley, were the two main positions, Hlangwani Hill and Green Hill held by the Boers opposed to General Buller. Hlangwani, the Boer left position at the battle of Colenso, was now their right with Green Hill on its immediate rear both strongly held, and formidable positions if attacked directly. It was expected, however, that a

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flanking movement on the right would compel their evacuation. Accordingly, at 6 a.m., the force marched to and occupied Hussar Hill, which is the nearest kopje on the right of Hlangwani.

February 15th.—Twenty thousand troops were on this date concentrated on the sides of Hussar Hill. Standing on Hussar Hill a few miles away to your left Hlangwani runs parallel with and close to the Tugela. Green Hill is on your left front, starting a short distance north of Hlangwani, in an on-end direction from the river. The Boers had extended their positions by occupying Monte Christo, a lone hill some distance on the right of Green Hill as you look from Hussar Hill and Cingolo, another isolated cone a short distance on the right of Monte Christo. The Boer positions then were Hlangwani on the left, Green Hill on the left-front, and Monte Christo and Cingolo on the right-front. On this "crusade," taking the improvement of guns into consideration, General Buller had the most powerful force of artillery that had ever accompanied an army. Reinforcements from home and the guns returned from guarding Barton's line of communication brought the total number up to 110, sufficiently powerful to engage and put out of action the combined artillery of both armies at Waterloo.

February 16th.—The artillery had a day's terrific shelling of Green Hill, during which Lyttleton's and the English Brigade carried out a reconnaissance. On this date the following plan of operations was carried out:—While the attention of the trenches on Green Hill was taken up by a terrific bombardment, and the threat of a direct attack, the English Brigade was sent round by the right flank to assault Cingolo. The latter advanced through one of the most difficult countries imaginable, completely covered as it was with small scrubby trees not much taller than a man, and intersected with a net-work of dongas. On arriving at the base of Cingolo, Major Fry command-

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ing, the leading half battalion formed up on a spur of the hill and opened fire on the Boers; the line was then successfully prolonged to the right by the other half battalion under Colonel Kitchener. On the extreme right a long sloping ridge came out from Cingolo. The 2nd Devons and the Queen's availed of this to reach the crest; then wheeling to the left cleared the kopje, the Boers retiring on their flank being turned. The hill was only weakly held, the Boers not counting on a flank attack, but actually expecting a frontal one on Green Hill which would have suited them admirably as it would probably cost thousands of British lives with very likely no other result. Soon after their retirement the Boers opened shell-fire on the position captured from them. The regiment bivouacked on the hill. G and H. Companies were employed during the night dragging the guns of the 64th Battery R.F.A. to a position from where Monte Christo could be shelled the next day; and so the thin end of the wedge was inserted by the capture of the Boers extreme left flank.

CASUALTIES.

KILLED—(Two Men),

No. 5504, Private Hague, W.

„ 4782, „ Mathers, H. (Died of wounds).

WOUNDED—(Ten Men).

Captain Berney Killed.

February 18th.—2nd Brigade assaulted, Monte Christo, *i.e.*, extreme left of Boer position. The Queen's advanced from right off the top of Cingolo Mountains, West Yorkshires on left from bivuoac of previous evening. First line commanded by Major Fry, B Company (Captain Berney), F Company (Major Watts), formed the firing line; C Company (Captain Carey), E Company (Major Heigham) in

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support, remainder of battalion forming reserve under Colonel Kitchener. 2nd Devon's formed second line, East Surrey Regiment Brigade Reserve. The assault was made practically without loss until the neck between Cingolo and Monte Christo was reached; B Company on the right, and F Company on the left, advancing rapidly against the crest, under cover of Artillery fire and long range Infantry volleys. B Company attacked direct up a precipitous slope dominating the Boer stronghold. E Company was formed to the left in the neck, and together with the machine guns kept up a heavy fire trying to quell fusilade from Boer laager. C Company rapidly reinforced B Company on crest of the hill.

The Boers retired to a further position along the ridge behind a reef of rocks. Captain Berney was killed whilst gallantly leading his Company to the assault. Colonel Kitchener prolonging the line to the right quickly drove the Boers from their second position, and charging across the plateau on the summit reached the crest overlooking the Boer laager on which a heavy fire was then poured. The Queen's were at this time clearing the eastern slopes of the hill, and the 2nd Devon's coming up, prolonged the line to the right. Covering their retirement from the laager, the Boers fought a capital rearguard action keeping up for some time a pretty heavy fire from parties of concealed riflemen, a pom pom and a field gun. Under cover of this fire the Boers retired towards the bridge over the Tugela near Onderbrook Spruit, their retrogade movement being expedited by a heavy rifle fire from the brigade.

CASUALTIES.

KILLED.

Officer—Captain T. Berney.

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N.C.O.'s and Men.

No. 1144, Private Brass, W.
„ 5022, „ Vaughan, J.
„ 4726, Corporal Silcock, J. (Died of wounds).
„ 3199, Private Howett, A.

Second Lieutenants Gretton and Porch, and forty men wounded.

Feelings experienced advancing under Fire.

Each Company was able to advance, keeping a clear line of fire. A Company advanced a short distance covered by the fire of one lying down in rere which then advanced in turn protected by the fire of the one gone on in front. The former repeated the evolution shielded by the one coming up, and so on alternately. Round here we had our first experience of advancing under fire, a less trying ordeal than lying down under fire in the open with little or no cover. Advancing under fire your mind is occupied with a good many things, looking out for cover, avoiding obstacles, etc. Lying down under fire in the open, you only think—How long, O Lord, how long. Advancing under "lead-showers" when the enemy opens at long range is much less enervating than when the enemy reserves his fire for short range; the suspense in this being much more trying than the actual fire. The most trying advance of any is when the enemy has retired without being seen, as the suspense lasts right up to their trenches, that is to say, when there is actually no fire whatever.

Dauntless Paddy Maguire,

Ascending Monte Christo we met a man named Paddy Maguire, being carried down from the front Company badly wounded in the leg. Out in India Paddy always won the boxing championship in the

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regimental tourney. He was a full-cast Irishman, his crest—the Donnybrook Coat-of-Arms, *i.e.*, crossed blackthorns, knee breeches, and swallow-tail coat—revealing the purity of his martial lineage. When passing by on a blood-dripping stretcher, Paddy extending his left hand, and pressing it with his right, to represent an aimed rifle, mournfully exclaimed, "They did it to me with that, lads." Then, as he drew back his "props" in fighting attitude, roared out, "But, by God, they wouldn't do it to me with them, or the ould Irish blackthorn."

Had Paddy grown the tail, which Darwinian folk assert oldtime people possessed, the memory of the Kilkenny cat battle, in which two felines left naught save their tails behind, would have been long ago relegated to oblivion. Adorned as above, Paddy would outdo the historical cats by battling till not even the tip of his steering appendage remained for identification purposes. No. 4 Section of D Company was composed of the oldest soldiers in the regiment, a mixture of Reserve Section D and Regimental men, and on account of each man's long beard, giving the Section a very Boer-like appearance, was nick-named the "Wakkerstroom Commando." It was one of this section at Sanderton who, on seeing his reflection in the mirror of a helio for the first time since leaving England, threw up his hands in surprise and proclaimed vociferously that he had espied a ginger-whiskered Boer beside him. After some side-splitting laughter at his expense, he was told to have another look when he would see it was his own ginger-whiskered physiognomy.

The Boy Officer.

Advancing up Monte Christo the "Wakkerstroom Commando" was led by a boy officer, named Lieutenant Frayer, who had arrived in the country with

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the Vaal Krantz draft. On getting near the summit of the hill one of the section espied water at the bottom of a donga, and going down to fetch some the remainder of the section filed after him like so many ducks. The boy officer, standing on the edge of the donga, implored of them to come back, but his entreaties falling on deaf ears he abused them, said he was ashamed of them and would "never speak to one of them" again. He wrung his hands in despair, and behaved generally as mother-hen does when her ducklings go for a swim. When the "Wakkerstrooms" filed out of the donga and resumed the advance, Lieutenant Frayer apologised for his hot words, and later when he received a present he distributed the lot among his "Wakkerstroom Commando." The boy officer is the bravest being on earth; he would lead you through the gates of hell and shed tears if you hesitated to follow him; and in the chorus of condemnation two words stand out conspicuously, HE LED. If you stand in rear of the artillery when a hill is to be assaulted you will be among a lot of people watching through field glasses the effects of the exploding shells. During this process your attention will be attracted by a line of men lying down on one of the flanks of the artillery. If it is the first time you have witnessed the scene you will most likely want to know what these men are there for. You hear the order to the men lying down—Stand up, advance from the left centre or right to twelve paces, extend, and you know it is "THE LITTLE INFANTRY MAN" about to be let loose. At home the infantry may not be quite so popular as other branches of the service, the infantry man's dress is not quite so handsome as the cavalry man's, but on active service he is supreme. In action he is the only man who sees the inside of the enemy's trench while the scent is hot.

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Water the Wine of the Battlefield.

If you are desirous of knowing why water is so very essential to the man in the firing line, go and lie down among the infantry forming the latter and be prepared to advance with them through the bullet-swept zone. Look back upon your past life and try and recall if the anticipation of any public performance produced a dry, nervous feeling in your throat; for instance, when about to make your first election speech, or going out to the wickets to bat in your initial cricket match. Well, now you have to surmount the crest of yonder hill, running a slight risk of getting transferred to that next world train, bearing khaki-clad recruits to Old Beelzebub. It is not necessary you should accompany the firing line; lying down with them before starting off will teach you thoroughly why water is the wine of the battlefield. Each man has his water bottle filled before going into action; and he takes such care of it, a little sip now and then, no miser being half so anxious about his gold. The man who would give a comrade a drink in these circumstances is one of the best natured fellows in existence. Advancing up Monte Christo Major Yale called out — "Five sovereigns for a drink of water." He could have increased the offer to fifty and kept the money in his pocket. In this respect a vast difference exists between the recruit and the veteran—the former is nervously dry going into action, the latter convalescently cool. The capture of the high commanding Monte Christo made the positions of Hlangwani and Green Hill untenable, and the Boers retired across the Tugela, Barton's Fusilier Brigade advancing and taking possession of the abandoned positions.

February 20th.—The regiment moved off Monte Christo and marched to Hlangwani, bivouacking on the east slope of the hill in the centre of the deserted

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Boer Laager. Looking from Hlangwani the Tugela flows a short distance away from the latter's base. You will see the terrible trenches which proved impregnable to frontal attack at Colenso, and now rendered innoxious, *i.e.*, death traps to any enemy occupying them. Fort Wylie is just across the river, and running straight on towards Ladysmith are the low collection of hills forming the Boer main position at the battle of Colenso. The latter run back for four miles and a half ending in a much higher hill called Fusilier or Barton's. On this date the whole army had established itself on the south bank of the river and Hart's Brigade had occupied Colenso. The artillery getting in position on Hlangwani shelled the little kopjes across the water.

General Buller's One Mistake.

February 21.—A pontoon bridge was thrown over the river, and Wynne's Lancashire Brigade crossing seized and held a position after a severe struggle.

February 22.—The main body of the infantry passed across on this date, and the army was committed to the task of fighting its way straight ahead over the little kopjes and over Pieter's and Fusilier Hills, a good part of the road to Ladysmith. In this operation General Buller committed the mistake of his life. When on manœuvres marching down from Ladysmith to Colenso we bivouacked on a Saturday at the foot of Pieter's Hill, and on Sunday the regiment was taken over the different positions round here by Colonel Fry in command, who kindly pointed out the places of interest, and explained the why and wherefore of things. Pieter's Hill, rising from the Tugela, is both high and big, steep at the river side, at the north side, and the reverse side facing Grobelar's Kloof, but easier of ascent facing Colenso, making up for this as a defence by affording no cover on that side. Standing on Pieter's or Hart's Hill, which is simply the highest point on Pieter's, you

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will have a splendid view of the country for miles. A short distance to the north, and between Pieter's Hill and Ladysmith, Fusilier or Barton's Hill catches the eye. Opposite on the other side of the Tugela a hill runs back from the river lower than Pieter's, but sufficiently high for our artillery occupying it to make Pieter's Hill and Fusilier Hill untenable. The youngest soldier could see at a glance that if General Buller had crossed the Tugela in rear of Fusilier Hill, under cover of the artillery stationed on the kopje alluded to, the Boers would evacuate their positions without firing a shot. Ascending Pieter's Hill from the Tugela, Hart's Hill is straight ahead on the other side, facing Gobelar's Kloof. When the Irish Brigade in their attack on Hart's Hill climbed from the river side to the summit of Pieter's the initial part of their advance was made under splendid cover, *i.e.*, hundreds of rocks, the majority of them several tons in weight, and many large enough to screen half a company. However, as they approached Hart's Hill the boulders got smaller and smaller, disappearing altogether when the summit of the hill was reached. Hart's Hill, so called from the attack on it being led by Major-General Hart, is the highest and the smallest peak on the kopje.

Gallant Inniskillings.

On the far side where the peak ends the Boers had built a tremendous sangar about twelve feet thick and running across the whole breadth of the peak. The ground in front of this sangar for two hundred yards was as level as a tennis court. The Irish Brigade reached the edge of this naked space and naturally failed to negotiate it. The Boers stood up behind the sangar and fired point-blank. Boers who were present told Colonel Fry that the Inniskilling Fusiliers who were in the front line fought a most stubborn battle, making such desperate efforts to come on, that they

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thought no men could be trained to face and march against such odds as the sangar held by them, that Colonel Fry may call it magnificent, but they called it foolish. They told him of a man of this regiment who jumped up from a prone position, charged by himself across the level, leaped on their sangar and toppled on to them dead. They marvelled then as they marvel now and will till the end of their lives how he ever managed to get there. He was the son of a poor old Connacht man—a bouchal wont to lead the reapers a merry dance through Connemara's cornfields—a bouchal, who died shouting Faugh-a-ballagh on the crest of a Boer trench. In this fight on Hart's Hill the Inniskilling Fusiliers had all their officers, with the exception of two, killed or wounded. Immediately on the edge of the level part of Hart's Hill, two hundred yards from the Boer sangar, a monument in memory of the Inniskilling Fusiliers who fell in this action with the names on marble slabs let into its four sides meets the eye. A short distance to the left of this, down a slope of the hill, a pedestal of valour casts its shadow across the graves of Connaught Rangers, while below it, still further away, another commemorates the memory of the Boers who fell round here. At 2 a.m. the West Yorks crossed the Tugela by the pontoon bridge bivouacking on the plain, east of Fort Wylie. About 7 a.m. the Boers shelled the brigade from Grobelar's Kloof, but did no damage and it moved under shelter of Fort Wylie. The Colenso railway bridge was blown down by the Boers some time previously, and they certainly made a neat job of it. At 1 p.m. the regiment advanced and took up a position on a ridge covering the guns and howitzers, and spent the night entrenching.

February 23rd.—Colonel Kitchener was appointed to command the Lancashire Brigade, and Major Fry assumed command of the West Yorks. The Boers

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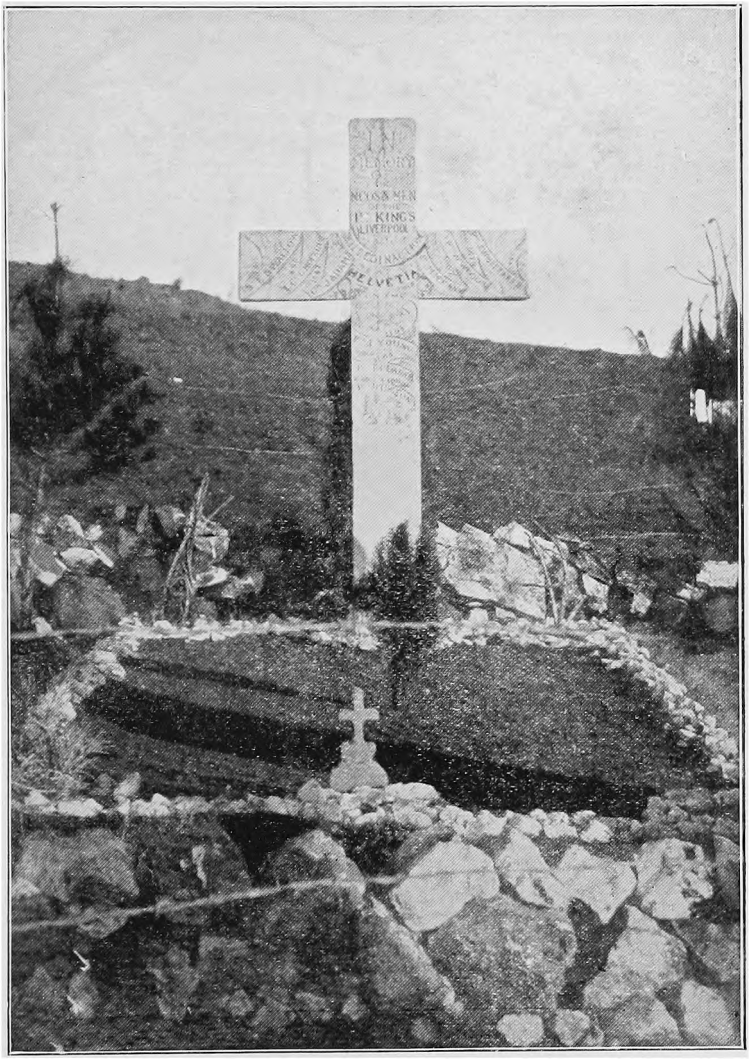

HELVETIA,

Where "Chums" of The Liverpool Regt. are Sleeping.

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shelled the different positions held by the advancing army, and were *vigorously* replied to by our guns. During the afternoon Hart's Brigade advanced and captured a position near the Tugela Waterfall. The river dropping here about fifty feet makes a pretty respectable Cascade.

Officers Dressed like Privates.

For some time now the officers had adopted the dress of the rank and file; that is to say they wore a belt with two pouches, brace straps and carried a rifle, marched in the ranks, fired, etc., acting exactly like one of the rank and file, but in command as usual giving the words to advance, halt, etc. The latter conditions are certain to prevail in all future civilized campaigns. The Germans would scarcely approve of this as they say the officer loses dignity, and consequently his power over the men by going into the ranks. Our officers never lost dignity by doing so and became more popular on the contrary, which counts for a good deal more than dignity on active service. The Germans had their last fight forty years ago, when tactics were about the same as in the days of Julius Cæsar. A concealed rifleman, armed with a modern rifle, half a hundred riflemen armed with modern rifles advancing to attack him in BATTLE-AXE formation, an officer in rear probably grinding out swear words, it would be more than even betting on the rifleman accounting for the lot, but the officer would preserve his dignity at the expense of his life.

The English Brigade advancing along the railway relieved the Lancashire force in a defensive position on a minor hill. This was the plan carried out:— The Boers were pushed off a little kopje; it was then occupied by our infantry who built sangars and held it in an octopus-like grip. The infantry pushed on again; stole another little kopje and put it as it were in their pocket.

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Irish Brigade the pick of the Basket.

While here the Irish Brigade came up on our left. A few hours later General Buller rode forward to the West Yorks and sent for General Hart, telling him his brigade, supported by artillery, would assault Pieter's Pill. He quietly explained what he "wanted doing," and severely lectured on what he didn't "want doing." A Brigadier present volunteered for the service with his brigade. General Buller said: "No; Hart's the brigade for me." The Irish brigade, after being relieved by the Durham Light Infantry and the 1st Rifle Brigade from Lyttleton's corps, moved off immediately, going along the railway line under cover of the embankment; but after a short march had to cross an exposed position called Pom Pom Bridge, topping up sixty casualties in negotiating this bullet swept space. The brigade scaled Pieter's on the Tugela side. We heard the rifle fire and knew the attack had developed. The Boers on Pieter's had retired to the extreme end of the hill, reserving their fire until the brigade got to pretty close quarters, when it was also exposed to a long-range rifle fire from Fusilier Hill on its right flank. The Irish Brigade had been asked to perform an impossible task, which, however, was thoroughly accomplished a few days later by an attack of the main army on the whole of the Boer ground. While here there was a good deal of haphazard side-shelling of the hill held by our brigade by masked Boer guns, one shell accounting for three of the cook's mules.

February 24th.—Ordered to join General Hart's Force who had lost seriously the day before in the futile attempt to capture Hart's Hill. B, E, and H Companies remained in the trenches as they could not be withdrawn, the enemies fire being pulverising. The remainder of the battalion proceeded along the railway line over Pom Pom Bridge, so called from the terrible Boer fusilade directed on it from a pom

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pom in position at the foot of Hart's Hill. The Irish Brigade was first over Pom Pom Bridge, and had placed sand-bags on the side facing the galling gun-fire creeping out on "all fours" and fixing them in position succeeded in this way in making about half the bridge comparatively safe, but evidently getting "fed up," left the other side unfinished. While working on this job a party of the Connaught Rangers suffered severely. Until actually getting to the bridge you were under cover from a high embankment, and passing over immediately came under cover from another lofty ridge. After "running the gauntlet" safely each man was an interested spectator from the shelter of the bank of the different postures adopted by the adventurer's coming after him. The majority crept across on all fours, some crouching low like aged cockle-pickers, others rushed over in an upright position, while many there were who distained crouching or rushing, but deliberately walked across the dangerous zone with an air of, "Let 'em all come." After the unsuccessful attack on Hart's Hill the Irish Brigade being relieved by the 1st Durhams and the 1st Rifle Brigade of Lyttleton's force retired during the night a few hundred yards, getting under cover of the rocks thickly strewn about here. The English Brigade did not join Hart's Brigade, but lined the bank of the Tugela just before coming to Pieter's Hill. What made the Tugela Heights so very trying, the Boers kept up a continuous sniping during the night, not doing much damage, certainly, but very annoying, keeping everyone on the alert by the noise of hissing bullets and uncanny flashes of Mauser fire. At this time no one was challenged in front of a position held by a regiment. The order was similar to a battleship's when doubtful of the identity of a torpedo boat—Sink her first and then find out all about her.

The Boers were now evidently getting very funky,

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or alarmed of a night attack; for at short intervals the hillsides rang with rifle fire, and ping-pong music rolled through the midnight air. On account of a *contretemps* between our outposts and the enemy, the wounded were left lying where they fell on Hart's Hill for two whole days; but now, on February 25th, an armistice to 9 o'clock at night was given to bury the dead and collect the maimed. Some very observant stretcher-bearers who went on Hart's Hill on this date reported that if our artillery was taken back across the Tugela and placed on the high ground over the river it would command the Boer positions of Pieter's, Hart's and Fusilier Hills. On this date it was announced that anyone wishing to attend Divine Service could do so by going on Pieter's and joining the Irish Brigade. A good many took advantage of this privilege, including a number whose persuasions did not entitle them to soar quite so high. There was no service, however, the Padre being busily engaged performing the burial rites where "The flowers of the forest" lay cold in death. The Boers were walking about on Hart's Hill and Fusilier Hill, and the brigade which relieved the Irish was holding its position a few hundred yards below. It was a delightful experience to be able to walk about and see and be seen without a bullet coming in your direction. Yes, indeed, delightful, notwithstanding that the congealed blood of many a gallant compatriot lay 'neath your feet. Of course no one went near the Boer positions. Everyone expected to see the Irish Brigade in a despondent mood; whereas you would actually think you were approaching Mick Shanks' betting ring on Punchestown Racecourse.

There was lots of money "knocking about" at this time, and the Irish Brigade having volunteered to have another try to capture Hart's Hill, a good many of its members would lay you five or ten pounds on their chance of success. They did not

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mention who would hold the stakes; but, judging by their enthusiasm it could be easily imagined you would. On active service, anyhow, there is no more loyal man drawing the breath of life than the Irish soldier; and things have been said and laughed at in other regiments which would not be tolerated in an Irish corps. After crossing the Tugela, outpost duty was very severe, the whole regiment going on every night. After dark on the night of the armistice Captain Mansel Jones took D Company on advanced outpost duty, some distance from the river towards Hart's Hill, along an open space on the Colenso side of Pieter's Hill. This being the first trial of such dangerous work round here, everyone was on the qui vive, and true to expectations, the men of D Company are never likely to forget their experience. The company had proceeded a good way on the road towards Hart's Hill, when, exactly at 9 o'clock, the Boers, either wishing to let everyone know they were still in position, or perhaps were afraid that General Buller was taking advantage of the armistice to steal a "Bronkhorst Spruit march." opened a raking fire from the different positions held by them. Then the air overhead buzzed as if some hundreds of beehives had been kicked loose, causing D Company to fairly hug mother earth. The company was now between the "Devil and the Deep Sea," or, rather, the Tugela. If they retired, the regiment lining the bank of the river may forget they were out in front, and only remember the naval order—"Sink and find out afterwards;" and D Company would run a grave risk of being struck off the strength of the regiment. Fortunately the Boers did not know D Company was in their vicinity; and by lying low until morning and passing the time muttering, "How long, Oh! Lord how long?" like an oldtime congregation, enduring the rigmarole of Father Jerry's balderdash, we retired without casualties just before daybreak. An advanced outpost is very appropriately

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called by Tommy the "SACRIFICIAL POST," as in case of attack the men composing it would have only a poor chance of escaping. However, before Old Beelzebub's "all aboard" rang out they would have the consolation of knowing they were instrumental in alarming the camp, *i.e.*, announcing the presence of a Hades bound troop-train. In South Africa, with the exception of very favourable circumstances, advanced outposts were never "found." In European warfare an attack on an advanced post would be the preliminary to one on the main position. With Boers it does not follow, they being very partial to attacks on isolated stations. On this date the troops got rather glum on seeing the guns with their escorts re-crossing the Tugela to get in position on the other side whence they could shell the Boers' quarters on this side, they thinking, of course, another retirement had been ordered when everything looked so promising. Just before coming to Pom Pom Bridge a monument erected to the memory of the fallen Dublin Fusiliers stands on the left of the railway line. The Boers had placed a neatly made trestle bridge over the Tugela to connect Pieter's with the opposite bank and facilitate a retirement from positions on the other side, Monte Christo, Cingolo, &c.

A Ghastly Spectacle.

One of the worst features of the Tugela heights was the number of dead horses lying about, filling the atmosphere with a never-to-be-forgotten and not quite otto of roses perfume. At times, the air reeking with effluvium was unbearable. When a full moon lit up the haunting scene, the leg-stiffened, eye-glazed carcases lying at all angles, on kopje and veldt, presented a ghastly spectacle. Then one "drank in" the awful incense of war, and saw by

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the light of the pale-faced orb the sickening carnage of the battlefield.

February 26th,—The regiment moved to the side of Pieter's Hill next the Tugela. Such was the battalions capacity for taking cover that from the 22nd to the 26th casualties were only 11 wounded.

February 27th.—B, G and H Companies, who rejoined the regiment again at 6.30 a.m. under Major Heigham, had experienced heavy shell-fire with Hildyard's Brigade, but had escaped scathless. Orders received at 7 a.m. to join Colonel Kitchener's Lancashire Brigade (11th), he having received permission to attach his old regiment, the West Yorks, to his brigade. The main Boer position was to be attacked, the general scheme being as follows :—

General Barton's Brigade was to attack Green Hill (Fusilier Hill) on the left of the Boer position; Colonel Kitchener to attack Pieter's Hill in the centre; and Colonel Norcott's Brigade the hill on the Boer right (Hart's Hill), which General Hart had attempted a few days ago; the various attacks to be developed in the above order.

West Yorks in the Thick of It.

The regiment was detailed for the firing line. D and F Companies led the battalion and commenced the attack under cover of very *skilful* shelling by field guns in position on the other bank of the river, and within 2,300 yards of the Boer stronghold. The railway was gained without opposition, D and F Companies under Major Watts took up position amongst rocks immediately over the track, and brought a heavy fire to bear on Boers who were advancing to man trenches on hill to oppose Colonel Norcott's attack. A, B, C and D prolonged the line to the right, working round the right shoulder of the hill as far as the edge of the wood. D and F Companies were then ordered to wheel to the right and advance

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straight up the hill, being joined by C, B and G Companies as they passed.

The advance led by Major Watts and Captain Mansel-Jones was carried out in most gallant style. On arrival the Boers brought heavy shell-fire to bear upon the hill; E Company being then ordered to the right to hold the railway and clear the donga between Pieter's Hill and Fusilier Hill. This was accomplished in good style, and the fire from the sunken zone quelled.

As D and F Companies gained the summit they came under a heavy cross fire from the Boer post on the left. Our left was promptly turned slightly back, and heavy volleys were poured into the Boers who were standing up in their trenches, with excellent results.

This hill was subsequently taken by Colonel Norcott's Brigade. The South Lancashire Regiment then came up on our left. The Boers appeared now to be in full retreat, but for a short time we were subjected to rather a heavy shell-fire from two field guns and a Vickers'-Maxim. Rifle fire from a donga on the right front also gave some trouble, but before dusk all was quiet and Ladysmith relieved.

CASUALTIES.

Officers.

Captain Mansel-Jones, Captain Tew, Lieutenants Spry, Pennell, V.C., and Boyall, wounded.

KILLED.

N.C.O's. and Men.

No. 1750, Sergeant Poplar, F.
„ 2105, Private Fallon, C.
„ 5149, „ Smith, A. (Died of wounds).
„ 3544, „ Freele, J.

And twenty-five wounded. One Martini-Maxim gun was captured by the regiment.

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General Remarks.

Looking from Colenso, Pieter's Hill lies four miles and a-half away to the north. It starts from the river, runs straight across your front with the peak called Hart's Hill on the extreme left. Fusilier Hill lying a short distance to the north of Pieter's, in the direction of Ladysmith, goes up like a huge slanting cliff, rising to a level with the surrounding country. Norcott's Brigade attacked Hart's Hill from the Colenso side. The Lancashire Brigade going along the Tugela ascended Pieter's on the north side facing Fusilier Hill. Barton's Fusilier Brigade going also along the bank of the river attacked Fusilier Hill, the extreme left of the positions held by the Boers.

On coming out to this country the order for the artillery was to shell a hill until the infantry got within a thousand yards of the summit, which order was decreased to five hundred yards on repeatedly realising that the enemy remained in position till our infantry almost reached the base. It having been discovered later on that when the Boers knew a hill was to be shelled, they retired unseen down the obverse side, leaving a few look-out men safely ensconced behind rocks who signalled for the main body's return when the artillery had ceased fire. In this final attack on Pieter's, Hart's, and Fusilier Hills, the artillery was ordered to fire until the infantry got to within one hundred yards of the summit. Of course accidents may happen by shells dropping short, but it saves the main artery when pitted against a cunning enemy like the Boers.

Record Shell-Fire.

The 110 guns were switched on to each position in succession, and the advance was made under a screaming canopy of shells. In this final fight in the relief of Ladysmith the Boers came under such a smashing shell-fire, the like of which no living mortals before

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them ever dreamt of. When you praise the Boers for their bravery you must not forget that the men who had to go over the open to seek them out were fairly inoculated with the same asset. The Boers admit that this last fight in the Relief of Ladysmith was the most expensive one to them of the whole campaign. You will always know the difference between a bursting common shell and a lyddite by the colour and volume of the smoke and the loudness of the report.

The Green-eyed Lyddite Shell.

The smoke from a common shell is white; from a lyddite dark green, with a dozen times the volume, and at least half a-dozen times more row. A lyddite shell striking an object paints it yellow; and a position that has been shelled by it is easily recognized. After the South African campaign too much was made of the craze for individualism in war. The Boers are hunters, or descendants of hunters, which amounts to about the same thing, and naturally can work the individual system better than others. Even they or at least a number of them, carried the business too far if their homes happened to be a long way off by going back and sticking there altogether. The Boers had a great advantage in knowing their country thoroughly, as they trek through it in all directions. Men at home know very little about the topography of their land, travelling solely by public road or train, and never thinking about it (as the Boers do) as a possible cover for game-stalking defence in case of a rising of natives, etc. If you ask a farmer at home what would be the best position to take up on his farm in case of attack from any direction, he would probably swear informations against you before the nearest magistrate as a dangerous person to be abroad. If an Irish peasant found a cannon by the roadside, he would sneak it

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home and "make a churn of it"—a characteristic thoroughly in keeping with the despicable habit of sneering at the military, and hat-doffing to the police.

Slim Peit, the Lynx-Eyed Fighter of the Human Race.

The Boers are the only people in the world who can fight systematically without being drilled. The hunters and trekkers blood in their veins accounting for this qualification.

An untrained European who can shoot would probably hold a position as well as the best trained soldier; but let him get shelled out of it and he could never be got to reform again, having neither the training that teaches him unity is strength, or the hunter's instinct which teaches him independence, and he becomes a lost sheep. The Boers had a qualification which gave them an immense advantage over anyone opposed to them—their marvellous eyesight. Before the termination of the campaign the West Yorks were occupying the Wakkerstroom Piet Relief block-house line. A position on this line called Amsterdam Hill was in charge of two companies of the regiment, and a small party of National Scouts (Boers) whose duty it was to go out scouting from the hill.

Marvellous Eyesight.

One day some horses were seen from this hill grazing out on the plain about four miles away. Major Cayley commanding the post sent for one of the National Scouts and asked him if he thought the horses belonged to a party of Boers, handing him a field glass. The man said in his broken English:—"Me never use glasses, me can see better without them." He said the horses belonged to a party of Boers who had evidently gone into a kraal hard by,

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having hobbled or knee-haltered their horses. Major Cayley said to him:—"You dont mean to say you can see with the naked eye whether those horses are hobbled." The Boer answered:—"Easy enough." Major Cayley then told a number of our fellows standing round to pass the field glass and try if any of them could make out whether the horses were hobbled. The answer was a distinct negative. None of our fellows, with the naked eye, could make out what the shadowy forms on the distant plain were, whether horses, cows, or anything else.

Another instance of this:—A party of our people went out with a mule waggon to collect mealies reported hidden in a cave some distance away. An old surrendered Boer who visited the hill weekly for rations, happening to put in an appearance on this day, remarked to Captain Ingpen who had arrived from India in charge of a draft of time expired men, and was posted to Amsterdam Hill, that he could see our men returning, simultaneously pointing out the direction. Captain Ingpen said he must have made a mistake, as he himself could discern nothing, and how did he diagnose they were our men. The old Boer answered:—"I know, because they are wearing helmets and khaki." An English Colonial present with the National Scouts said:—You must remember, Captain, that man is looking at an object miles outside the range of your vision. Captain Ingpen replied:—Extraordinary. I have heard something of the marvellous eyesight of the Boers, out in India, but did not quite credit it until now. An hour or so later the men and waggon became visible to the ordinary eye. General Buller has said, that if a European and Boer were walking towards each other in an open country, the Boer would see the other two miles in advance; and the General did not err on the side of exaggeration. General Carrington says, a Boer has magnifying eyes. The Boers

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had a superb instinct for travelling at night, collectively or individually, which greatly helped to prolong the campaign. North of the post, about 600 yards from the foot of the hill, ran a small stream. Over this the National Scouts had placed a plank hidden away 'midst the rushes. On a dark night any of those men could walk directly on to this trestle. A European would take some time to locate the place by day. The Germans say, the British slowly bungled the campaign. Would the Germans have beaten the Boers? Before three months of the conflict had expired their military eyes would have been opened to an extent never dreamt of in the schools of theoretical tomfoolery. Yes, and discovered that the moustachios which bristled so daringly on a "Kaiser William by the Rhine" would have become a woe-be-gone hirsute appendage on a "Kaiser William by the Vaal." Before six months had gone by they would know that though giants on their own midden, the journey of 7,000 miles had considerably reduced their fighting weight; and before nine months had elapsed they would have retired punctured, sadder, but wiser men.

As the Boers' very existence for decades, trekking and hunting, comprised the essence of military training, it would be very foolish for people at home to imagine they were qualified to defend their country by simply learning to shoot and ignoring drill.

February 28th.—Bivouacked on Pieter's Hill overlooking the Tugela. The cavalry under Lord Dundonald rode into Ladysmith.

March 1st.—Marched to Nelthorpe near Umbulwana about ten miles; here the 2nd Division bivouacked, not far from where the big town-like camp hospital stood.

Famished Men.

We were visited here by a good many of the men from this hospital, who certainly looked very

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emaciated, and thanked you profusely for a bit of biscuit. When Tommy thanks you profusely for a bit of biscuit he is very, very poor indeed. The sick and wounded from the different sangars round Ladysmith were sent to this hospital, which, of course, was neutral ground, and healthy.

"Funkfontein."

Always endeavouring "to get his own back," the Tommy, who could not get ill "by hook or crook," christened it "Funkfontein" in a spirit of jealousy. When a man disappeared off his post round Ladysmith, and someone enquired of his whereabouts, the answer was invariably, "Gone to Funkfontein."

March 2nd.—Remained in bivouac in the same place.

March 3rd.—The relieving force marched through Ladysmith, the besieged garrison lining the streets. Imagine our appearance marching into Ladysmith. No shaving since leaving England, no wash for three weeks, blackened from the sun to a complexion at least as dark as a Hindu, and with a uniform having a very tramp-like appearance, a more villainous, serviceable looking lot of scoundrels never marched through a respectable town.

Sharkey Enters Ladysmith Breechesless.

If anyone marching through Ladysmith on this day were to enter an English town, minus his rifle and accoutrements, he would be instantly arrested, and accompanied by a howling mob to the police station. There the charge against him would probably be, that he, being a desperate-looking ruffian, was likely to rob a bank; and in the operation, if interrupted, would not hesitate to shoot.

Just before entering the town, the anger of the famous Sharkey aroused by the tripping up action of his dilapidated breeches—the seat of which looked like

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an immense car-mop—pulled the offending garments off altogether. Then, on his appearance being designated worse than before, laughingly replied, that he would enter Ladysmith decently as a Highlander. Without kilt, however, Sharkey could not fill the rôle of the fighting "Goat-Sucker." Rising to the occasion, he secured an old sack, and with the cord that bound it round his hips, dangling in front, spurnn-wise, marched through the streets of Ladysmith to the slogan,—"Scotland for Ever." The scene was unique, for never before, in the triumphant progress of England's army, did the national dress of Scotland cut such a minor figure. It was a glorious moment for Sharkey, who, never tired of making history, saved the day for Scotland, by transforming a Private of the West Yorks into a thoroughbred Highlander. He certainly seemed delighted to be the only man wearing Scotland's national dress marching into Ladysmith; and had the consolation of knowing that he was clear of microbes from his khaki jacket to his putties for the first time during the campaign. The Dublin Fusiliers got the position of honour, leading the other regiments through the streets of Ladysmith. On crossing over the bridge, turned to the left and marched up High Street through two lines of troops forming the garrison, and sitting on the footpath on each side of the street, continuing right out in the country, the last being the sailors of H.M.S. Powerful, who, of course, occupied the right of the line. The poor fellows sitting on the footpaths must envy the tattered and tanned ragamuffins who swung past with health and strength emanating from every pore, and who had just passed through a military training such as no troops before ever experienced. General Buller and General White sat their horses side by side with their staffs in rear of them, in front of the Town Hall, situated about the centre of High Street. The left half of the clock tower on the Town Hall was blown down, a

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Long Tom shell from Umbulwana just missing the clock, and was never repaired, being left as a curio. The pipes of the Gordon Highlanders played just before coming to the Town Hall.

Received us Lying Down. "Washed Out."

It was an unique experience to see troops lining a street sitting on the footpath, the reason, of course, being the men were miserably weak. The troops marching into Ladysmith got a most gentlemanly reception from those lining the streets. The few civilians present went fairly mad, but Tommy's reception would do credit to the House of Lords for thoroughbred coolness when outvoting the Budget. Some slightly nodded their heads and slightly smiled, just as her ladyship would on meeting the milkman; some put their heads on one side and smiled as his lordship might do on seeing his favourite old butler the first time in the morning; while others there were who took not the slightest notice, the whole having an air about them: there is nothing to be excited about, if things were reversed we would do the same for you.

Sharkey to the Rescue—His appearance changes the whole Scene.

Tommy proved on this day that he is one of the most cosmopolitan men in the world. Sharkey's advent changed the complexion of everything, he being accompanied by a roar of laughter like the roll of drums. What with Scot's Wha, Wha, from the bagpipes of the Gordon Highlanders, and hundreds of voices shouting, "Scotland for Ever," as the man with a bag for a breeches hove in view, the scene was indescribable. Two officers of a rifle regiment, the only persons standing up in their Company, on seeing Sharkey threw up their hands and sinking down joined their comrades on the ground in an insup-

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pressible scream of laughter. Probably never has any one in the history of triumphant entries to beleagured towns, brought such joy to saddened minds, and famished hearts as Private Sharkey did, when marching with a bag for a breeches, *i.e.*, a Highlander into Ladysmith.

April 10th—The following officers, N. C. O.'s and men have been mentioned from time to time in despatches and appeared in the *London Gazette* on Feb. 8th, 1901 :—

"1939—Sergeant G. Ford, Monte Christo, 19th February, 1900. When both Company officers were shot he commanded his Company with cool judgment and courage."

Sir Redvers Buller's despatch of the 30th March, 1900 :—

"1750—F. H. Poplar (killed in action, 27th Feb., 1900). Throughout operations, 14th to 27th, he always showed conspicuous coolness and courage."

"4778—Private J. Moran, 21st February, 900 Volunteered to carry back a message from Lieut. Boyall under very heavy fire, and was wounded while doing so."

"4560—Private H. Goodyear, 24th January, 1900. Spion Kop. Conspicuous gallantry as signaller, in signalling all day under very heavy fire."

Sir Redvers Buller's despatch, 30th March, 1900 :—

"Major Fry, Major Watts, Captain J. H. Berney (killed), Lieut. and Act.-Adjt. L. H. Spray, Lieut. H. S. Pennel, V. C., 2nd Derby Regiment (attached), Lieut. O. H. L. Nicholson."

Sir Redvers Buller's despatch, 1st February, 1900 :—

"Colonel F. W. Kitchener reports that Lieut. A. M. Boyall conducted a patrol to within 300 yards of the Boer trenches to examine ground for an advance. Out of sixteen men he had only one man killed and two wounded, although exposed all day to the full view of the enemy on open ground and on a grass

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slope. His conduct showed exceptional coolness and gallantry."

"4788—Private J. Moran. Carried back a message from Lieut. Boyall under very heavy fire, and was wounded."

"2924—Private Powell. Twice carried water to wounded men lying out in the open under heavy fire."

"Color-Sergeant Kinsley. When his Company was unexpectedly caught by a heavy cross fire, which wounded both his officers, showed coolness and intelligence in withdrawing his men steadily to cover, and gallantly in bringing his Captain under cover when mortally wounded. His case is an exceptional one, worthy of recommendation for the Medal for Distinguished Conduct."

Sir Redvers Buller's despatch, 19th June, 1900:—"The following names are mentioned by Commands as having performed good services in addition to those previously mentioned:—

2ND BATTALION WEST YORKSHIRE REGIMENT.

Major W. Fry, Commanding.
Major H. E. Watts.
3325, Sergeant J. Walmsley.
5054, Private T. Dodd."

Sir Redvers Buller's Despatch, 9th November, 1900:—

"The 2nd Battalion West Yorkshire Regiment was, after the promotion of Colonel Kitchener, commanded by Major Fry, who proved himself a most capable Commander, and the Regiment well maintained its high character."

The following officers and N.C.O's. merit special mention:—

"Major H. E. Watts.
Captain C. E. Woods, (1st Volunteer Battalion).
Lieutenant S. G. Francis (an excellent transport officer).

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2nd Lieutenant C. J. H. Lyster.
No. 3147, Sergeant A. E. Bridle.
„ 721, 1st Class Army Sergeant H. Southern.
„ 3325, Sergeant J. Walmsley (who distinguished himself in charge of the Maxims of the Battalion).
No. 2430, Corporal P. Conroy (who proved himself a most gallant and trustworthy soldier."

2ND BATTALION P. W. O, WEST YORKSHIRE REGIMENT.

To be a Companion of the Order of the Bath :—
" Lieutenant-Colonel William Fry.

Captain Mansell-Jones received the Victoria Cross for conspicuous bravery on Pieter's Hill."

To be a Companion of the Distinguished Service Order :—
" Major Jas. Corbett Yale.
Lieutenant Sydney Goodall Francis.
„ Octavius Henry Lothian Nicholson.
„ Alfred Morley Boyall."

To be Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel :—
" Major H. E. Watts."

To be Brevet Major :—
" Captain W. S. Carey."

To have the Distinguished Conduct Medal :—

" No.	1812,	Col.-Sergeant	E. Busher,	E Company.
„	3325,	Sergeant	J. Walmsley,	F „
„	2291,	Lce.-Corp.	J. Rownsley,	D „
„	5373,	„	F. Scott,	G „
„	2924,	Private	A. Powell,	E „
„	5090,	„	J. Banks	A „
„	5171,	„	B. Woodhead,	D „

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SOUTH STAFFORD REGIMENT.

To be a Companion of the Distinguished Service Order :—

"Captain E. Layton, now Major, 2nd West Yorks Regiment."

General Buller the Idol of his Command.

When General Buller was at Standerton he went to interview Lord Roberts at Pretoria. On the return journey an escort of the West Yorks was to have met him by train at Graylinstad, 45 miles north of Standerton. On the way up, a few miles after passing Val Station, the train was brought to a standstill, the Boers having harnessed their horses to one side of the line, pulling the rail into an upright position for half a mile. The state of affairs was telegraphed or helioed to Graylinstad, and we retired towards Standerton for the night. On the following morning we steamed out to the broken track and awaited General Buller, who was riding across country. Soon after our arrival the General put in an appearance escorted by Strathcona's Horse, Canadian back woodsmen, mostly Fenchmen, and all having lassoes attached to the saddle. They gave General Buller a parting cheer or yell which should be heard to be realized. Looking very happy, General Buller mingled with the men, saying—"West Yorks, I am glad to see one of my old regiments again. Any news, boys?" They told him the train wreckers were a gang of German Boers whose object was evidently plunder. He said—"All right, I'll send Cleary after them."

As the train was on the open veldt we came supplied with trestles to pass the mules and waggon which accompanied General Buller across country into the train. A sergeant of ours, fresh from home, with new khaki and a gold chain round his neck, looking altogether as if he had just come out of a Pimlico

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band box, attempted to lead two mules up the plank into the waggon, but the animals kicked and reared and would have nothing to do with him. General Buller walked up to the sergeant, smiled good-humouredly at the gold chain, and said—"Let me have a try," the mules following him quietly up the impromptu gangway. I forget how many mules there were, but eighteen is the usual waggon span in South Africa. Each pair brought to the foot of the trestle followed the General quietly into the waggon. When the hybrids were stowed away we rolled the mule waggon to the planks leading on to an open truck. General Buller by himself gripped the pole and guided the waggon up the platform while we pushed, finishing off by steering it neatly round at the correct angle to the truck. Was General Buller liked? He was fairly adored. He was the only General who could, after practically three knock downs, bring his men determined and confident to the fourth and winning round.

A Final Word.

Mounted Infantry, taught to shoot over highland and lowland in all kinds of weather for future warfare— Mounted Infantry minus spears, sabres, and fog horns, *i.e.*, bawling officers. The former trained to fight in a major form in the style which fortunately the Boers were only able to enforce in a minor manner, viz., whirlwind attack and decoy-duck retreat—the essence of military strategy—nick-named by dunderheads "Guerrilla Warfare."

A Final Warning.

Never trouble about the "microbe chaser," who sleeps with a dog in his room, and a trio of lavatories on his corridor. Remember, the Dublin Fusiliers were reared amidst the microbes of Ash Street, the Coombe, and Stoneybatter. Never mind that freak product of a falsely developed nature— the lady

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medico, who openly advocates the unsexing of human beings, the abolition of religious rites in matrimonial ceremonies, and the substitution for the latter of the "Merry-Man," and "Bally Girls" registry office "Slap Up." From such, and the sex-problem playwright, you couldn't raise soldiers fit to even emulate the "prowess" of the volunteers who ran to Africa from their tailors' bills, and then skedaddled from the Boer bullets. The military prestige of a nation depends upon the mental and physical grit of its agricultural community, not on the stunted and ninny-headed popinjays of modern society. To keep men in the army, you must keep women in their homes. Take care that the Liberty of the female Latchkey doesn't lose to England the liberty of her Union Jack.

FINIS.

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A SUPPLEMENT OF SORROW.

DEATH OF THE AUTHOR.

HIS LAST DESPATCH FROM THE FINAL FIRING-LINE.

A WEE TRIBUTE TO HIS MEMORY

BY

ONE WHO KNEW HIM.

Dublin, October 9th, 1911.

READERS of this booklet will be painfully surprised to learn that, after penning its every line under the memory-clouding, hope-extinguishing process of an incurable illness, the author passed away in Baggot Street Hospital, Dublin, on the 29th of last month, just as the final proof-sheets of its manuscript had been revised. This sad event occurring much earlier than his condition foreshadowed, and contra to expert medical opinion, naturally postponed the publication of "A Peep over the Barleycorn" until the spring of the following year. Through the author's death taking place just as all save the binding of his booklet had been completed, its chronicling in the latter touches that chord of nature which makes us all akin, and adds a chapter of ineffable sadness to the little work he has left behind. Although his passing away under such strikingly pathetic circumstances accentuates the anguish of his friends and comrades, yet his demise reveals, through being announced within the compass of his own booklet,

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traits of golden character, acts of death-bed heroism which otherwise never would have caught the public eye. Had Providence ordained his course of life to run a few days longer, he would have had the consolation of seeing the quaint nomenclature wittily borrowed by him from the foresight of a Lee-Metford rifle, emblazoned on the cover of his military memoirs. However, this supplement of sorrow, linked by death to "A Peep over the Barleycorn," reveals the author's halo of valour—the halo to whose imperishable radiance he fired his last shot, and penned his last despatch within shadow of the grave.

His final rearguard action—a long drawn-out illness—was borne with that unmurmuring spirit and Christian resignation proverbial of the soldier decorated with many emblems of regimental rectitude and trophies of hard-fought campaigns. During the hope-inspiring "cease-fire moments," when the storm of that retreat which led to an Irish grave had temporarily subsided, the tramp of his relief column marching to the note of oldtime drum and trumpet, would in fancy strike his ear. Then the fire of that marvellous vitality which conquered a sunstroke temperature of 109 degrees in Calava, and proved impervious to the blood sapping elements of cholera-camp and battlefield, would blaze forth. To its history-recalling light he would raise an oldtime gun to an oldtime shoulder. Along its memory-arousing Lee-Metford barrel he would wistfully glance. Then, as recollections of long-faded events came vividly before him, he would turn to pen on a bedside table the thrilling acts he had witnessed "over the barleycorn" of the West Yorks.

Often, too, when chronicling the latter, he would gaze pensively at the hope-reviving rays of summer sunshine pouring through his window panes. Then a smile of joyful recognition would play upon that much bronzed face, into which the pallor of death was slowly creeping. Yes, a smile of joyful recog-

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A SOLDIER'S FAITHFUL FRIEND.

NURSE WILSON.

Flinched not from the final firing line. Stood bravely by till the last sod of earth was placed on the Author's grave.

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nition as he conjured up visions of gun and helmet glinting through their golden streamlets—the men of the old guard advancing to the relief of that veteran tug-o'-war's man, without whom for well nigh eighteen years the Yorkshires wouldn't handle a rope. But they came not to the rescue of heroic "Jack the Sniper," Jack who had so valiantly borne poor Peacock off Brynbella through a cyclone of shot and shell. No, for they knew not that the soldier who recked little of blood-saturated battleline and water-soaked bivouac had been laid low by the serpent of disease. Yet with quivering lips he spoke of them, and with trembling hand he wrote of them, penning his recollections of bloody plain and parapet during the breathing spaces, *i.e.*, the "cease-fire" moments of his last rearguard "fight."

What heroic efforts to compile this souvenir of an eighteen years' connection with the 14th Regiment, those of the emaciated hand which tremblingly penned the names of beloved old comrades within earshot of its owner's "Last Post"! How thoroughly in keeping with the author's valiant and self-sacrificing history they proved to be! Thoroughly in keeping for the emaciated hand which compiled on its road of death "A Peep over the Barleycorn" were the remnants of that iron-nerved arm to whose valorous action Private Peacock owed his life. True to the last it proved to be, for the emaciated hand which passed down to posterity the deeds of the heroes who "stuck it" with the Yorkshires from Estcourt to Vereeniging belonged to the man wont in one moment to admiringly pat the dauntless bulldog of the regiment, and in the next fondle the toddling child of the barrack square. To a profound development of the two latter characteristics—characteristics crystallising perhaps the most ennobling instincts of the human mind—must be attributed the reverence with which the author's utterances on social and

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military etiquette were hearkened to by young and old of the 2nd West Yorks. Indeed, nature formed in him the beau-ideal soldier; for whilst his battlefield rifle would never cease "barking" to a coward's signal, in private life the record defined by his emblems of regimental purity were never once consciously belied. Little wonder, then, that the soldier combining the courage of a lion and the tranquillity of a child should occupy the throne of sporting adjudicator to the 14th Regiment. On the latter he held impromptu courts in many temperate and tropical climes, and never once did a decision of his dim the golden chivalry of that fine old "Carbery House" above whose portals flashed the beaconlight of benevolence. Discerning an amount of bad blood brewing over the Hart v. Collins bare-knuckle fight at Maritzburg, he tried to evade the task of refereeing the combat. The principals would not, however, admit of a substitute, and refused to go on until the man of transparent honesty, and fearless action had appeared at the ringside. Hart secured the verdict. There is no need for me to tell the "old hands" of that regiment, in the creation of whose athletic and battlefield records he played such an enduring part, that he would not consciously deviate from the path of truth, step aside from a brow-beating braggart, or step in the way of a brow-beaten mendicant. As well might I assert that under the penalty of death he would abandon poor Peacock on the ill-fated crest of Brynbella.

Although holding every position of trust within his regimental domain, his unobtrusive nature and affability of temperament fended off all offers of promotion, for the use of order-enforcing phrases would stifle the big and bountiful pulsations of the late Charles James O'Mahony's kingly heart. To use his own words, the love of martial life won him to that profession in which the bowing and scraping of the counter-hand plays no part, nor the animal-like

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existence of the peasant. The former he laughingly alluded to as a "tender-toed haberdasher breed," whilst the history of the latter could, in his opinion, never rise above the hobside jargon of the smithy. He abhorred the effeminate nature of office or indoor life, believing that the spirit of true manliness could never thrive in the atmosphere of the street-shop and counting-house. Consequently his seeking and finding in the 14th Regiment his beau-ideals of humanity. With the latter he "ranted and rolled o'er many salt seas" and trudged the sun-beaten plains of Africa, India, Burma, and Arabia. With them, too, he breathed the perfumed air of oriental climes and the sulphurous fumes of the battlefield. Yes, and he died whilst depicting the joys and sorrows, *i.e.*, the victories and defeats, of the Yorkshire corps, wittily nicknamed by him "The Fourteenth Navvies." To him everything seemed commonplace alongside the far-flung battleline. There and there alone the dude and duffer found no place to cringe; there and there alone could be seen beings worthy of bearing the noble title Soldiers. Yes, and proudly he would boast that D Company possessed neither duffer or dude up Monte Cristo Hill when the bayonet of the soldier, not the bandle of the baffety man, beer-pump of the publican, or dung-pike of the farmer, held the power of Empire unbroken. Thus it will be seen why the author's first and only love went out (to use his own words) to the noble profession of arms. Yes, and I am proud to say that he, a man who would share his last battlefield crust with a homeless dog, found men within its ranks who placed honour and valour above everything. I saw the men of the West Yorks tested to the last degree when the "square" which their old tug-o'-war's man had held intact so long was suddenly broken. Did they wheel away? Did they flee to the left and right? No, Capt. Isaac, Sergt. Major Kinsley and the rank and file of the 14th stood bravely by; for the soldier whom nature had

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temporarily "thrown" had filled many a breach in canteen "pocket" and battlefield firing line.

The Final Scene.

The life-sapping courses of his last retreat were battled against by as noble a physician as ever administered to a stricken soldier—princely Dr. Parsons of Fitzwilliam Street, Dublin. This eminent practitioner knew his military patient's pedigree well, *i.e.*, knew the qualities which held the latter's head high amidst the roar of strife and low in prayer along its corpse-strewn wake of silence. Consequently all the knowledge that medical science possessed—knowledge crystallised in the art of one of Ireland's greatest physicians—was exercised unsparingly on his behalf. Everything, however, proved of no avail, and on the date already mentioned his light of life—the sun of valour

> Faded away—away—away
> Like light on a distant shore,
> Deeper and deeper it sank to rest,
> To rest and rise no more.

With its vanishing as noble a soul, as benevolent a soul as ever drew the breath of life "handed in" that gun o'er which a white flag never fluttered. Above his deathbed hung a picture of "Napoleon's Retreat From Moscow." Although grizzly veterans are seen tenaciously trailing Bonaparte o'er leagues of snow, many of the "bravest of the brave" have despairingly thrown away their arms. Not so, however, the man who had faced tornadoes of death on the crests of Bothwell, Brynbella and Monte Cristo. No, for "Jack the Sniper's" last sangar was his grave, and his last look on earth "A peep over the Barleycorn." Pathetic in the extreme was the "turning over" of that rifle which the author had so proudly and bravely borne along the mighty Ganges and Irawaddy, across Aden's scorching breast, through the primeval forests of Ashanti, and down south where

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AUTHOR'S DECORATIONS.

Campaigns—
Ashanti Expedition, 1895-1896.
South Africa, 1899, 1900, 1901, 1902.

ASHANTI STAR.
Presented by
Queen Victoria.

QUEEN'S STH. AFRICA MEDAL,
With Clasps.
Orange Free State.
Transvaal.
Tugela Heights.
Relief of Ladysmith.
Laing's Nek.

KING'S STH. AFRICA MEDAL,
With Clasps.
South Africa, 1901.
South Africa, 1902.

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the blood of many a comrade crimsoned Tugela's waters. Wed in the prime of life to a weapon of valour, he would not be divorced from it in his last "retreat," even though the latter led to a commonplace non-battlefield burial. No, he would cling tenaciously to it when every gleam of hope, every ray and spark of relief had vanished from his sick-bed horizon. So he did, for, true to the record of his bemedalled breast, death alone prevented the author from peeping over a Lee-Metford's foresight. A few days previous to his demise he held his last review, *i.e.*, his last inspection of the printer's final proof sheets. Then for the purpose of comparing notes and seeing that the latter contained an exact replica of his pen-drawn battle scenes, he took one long "Peep over the Barleycorn." On doing so he discovered many discrepancies between what was typed and what he had written. Then he shouldered his gun (pen) for the last time, and with a farewell shot linked the "broken alignment" of his martial manuscript. So passed away, in the hushed bosom of an hospital, a man who had come unscathed through maelstroms of slaughter. So passed away a man who had hung his head in silence above many a battlefield grave—a man who held in the front rank of the Yorkshires in the deadly march to Ashanti, and throughout that three years' fight over the African kopjes.

Sad indeed it was to see the white banner of disease spreading steadily across the author's brow, effacing day after day the bronze hue of the battlefield. Despite the signal of impending dissolution which illness had stamped upon his cheeks, his features retained their martial mien till all was over. The white flag of the death-bed drew from him neither whimper nor whine, and the big eyes rolled, and big moustache "flowed" as if still between spiked helmet and burnished chin-guard. As is well known to every member of the "old brigade," his vitality, like his bravery and generosity, was boundless. An almost

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superhuman display of these characteristics during his last "retreat," together with a pronounced reluctance to trouble nurse or doctor, resulted in his passing away surrounded by tokens of affection. No one ever knew the late Charles James O'Mahony to ride heedlessly by on the good ship "Prosperity" whilst a comrade signalled from aboard "The Rocks"—"Stranded." No, the beacon-light of benevolence, historically associated with the house of his birth, illumined his passage to the grave, just as it did when the bugle of his kingly heart called "all hands" to the canteen of the 14th Regiment. Thus it was that when the tobacco pouch and delicacies with which he was supplied had gone "the rounds" of his ward for the last time, the heart of the man who compiled this booklet lay still midst symbols of veneration — symbols placed on his bedside by the thin wan hands of dying comrades. Men roused again and again from the slumber of despair by his hope-inspiring reveille, "Cheer up Hayden, cheer up Clements, this troopship is not bound for Jordan." Impelled by the thoughts of what the heart acting thus on the road of death must have been in the flush of its owner's manhood, fellow-patients restored to health and long left hospital visited the late Charles James O'Mahony regularly. The short term spent by them within the shadow of death left behind furrowed brows and haggard features. Then, so to speak, having touched the zone of fire, they were drawn thither to honour a man whose life was ebbing fast away, but whose bounteous and fearless heart remained unaltered. They came back to pay tribute to the stranger whose heroic and edifying demeanour when illness had almost sealed the fountains of speech and thought, restored their belief and illumined their faith in human nature. Yes, returned to show their esteem for a soldier displaying within shadow of the grave a coolness similar to that which enabled him to note correctly battlefield

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CHARLES JAMES O'MAHONY'S GRAVE.

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incidents, the witnessing of which whitened the hair of many a cranium. Some were of gentle birth, and others of a rough-hewn pedigree. But he knew the characteristics of each type, for had he not left behind on many a hard fought field sons of the lordly castle and sons of the lowly cabin? Yes he knew each type, and he met each reference to his health with the one dauntless reply, *i.e.*, "Still in the firingline, still peeping over the Barleycorn." But at last came the visiting day, when men whose links of friendship had been fashioned by the valour of his last retreat, and men of life-long fealty, found the bed 'neath "Boney's" picture empty. Then, a choking came in the throat, and a tear-drop in the eye, for that tenantless couch betokened that a soldier of dauntless heart and kingly disposition had, with word of mouth, and stroke of pen, fired his last shot, and flashed his last bayonet.

Thus it was with his two most faithful visitors—men holding vastly different positions in life—Mr. Campbell, of Belgrave Square, Monkstown, and Mr. Monks, of Halliday Road, Dublin.

I have seen some of the world's toughest athletes, but for cool, calculating bravery and "soldier on," dogged durability give me the man who conquered a sunstroke temperature of 109 degrees in Calava. Give me the soldier whose sallies of Irish wit illumined the march to Ashanti, and where horned moon and lightning cloud hung sinisterly above the corpse-strewn kopjes of Colenso. If I mistake not, he was the first man of his regiment selected to seek out King Prembi in the uninhabitable heart of Coomassie. Although conquering a country in order that "patriots" who scoff at military men may "police it" was not exactly in keeping with his ideals, he waltzed through the Boer conflict. This notwithstanding that he was past the meridian of life at the beginning of the war, and that the men who stuck to the regiment through thick and thin slept for

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nineteen months with the earth for a bed and the sky for a counterpane. He stood something over 5 feet 9 inches high, weighed 12 st. 6 lbs., and was simply a block of "human woodbine." Given youth and a gruelling campaign as an endurance "test-piece," I would stand by the tug-o'-war's-man of the 14th Regiment, against any specimen of ancient or modern humanity. I knew him well, and the individual desirous of out-pointing the late Charles James O'Mahony in a long drawn-out conflict tackled the toughest proposition imaginable. As Sergeant Bartholomew once said to me, "Charles was a short-stepping man, and a long-striding comrade may head him for a day or two." "But," continued Bartholomew, "when rations were cropping down and water-soaked bivouacs cropping up, you'd find him leading the front rank a merry dance, or helping along a worn-out but gallant companion." Although reared in the lap of luxury, he was the grittiest man I ever saw, and for nerve-testing, health-wrecking rough and tumble work unbeatable. Being the possessor of an iron-cast constitution, he could sleep on the buffer of a railway truck all night and next day wallow through the mire of the battlefield. As for fear, he knew naught of it, and he passed away uttering "God's will be done" as his "Last Post" rang out—passed away true to the teachings of his Catholic Faith and the principles of a man who had never shown "The White Feather."

He sleeps in the shade of a Glasnevin sycamore—he of the rank and file, whose proud nature and prouder pedigree debarred his becoming a dictator of men—debarred his wearing the insignia of authority. He sleeps in the land of his birth, but not in the ancestral burial grounds. His interment in Dublin was rendered compulsory; for the railway strike debarred his being laid to rest in that old hillside by the sea, sentinelled by the tomb-girt temple of St. Faughna. Although shortness of time

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FROM THE FINAL "FIRING-LINE."

The Author's Last Despatches.

(TO THE PRINTER).

Penned on a scrap of paper a few days previous to his demise.

Have inserted after; from
the sprint on the left
rear. ping pong;

from the reed covered
river bank, ping pong;

Regimental Astronomer
Insert instead of
Astronomer Herschel
Sir Isaac Newton

His Signature, clipped from an old South African Letter.

Your affect Br
Charles.

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permits not the erection of his grave-head memorial, yet in the space of a few days—probably six months before regimental friends hear of the little work he has left behind—one of the most appropriate mementos in Glasnevin cemetery will mark his resting-place. Yes, for a casket-enclosed booklet placed on "Jack the Sniper's" grave will tell passers-by of the thrilling acts he witnessed "Over the West Yorks Barleycorn." Yes, and those who gaze at it will on turning away murmur, "How very sad! yet, how appropriate! how beautiful!" He wished the first ten copies to be presented to the following friends:—Nurse Wilson, Doctors Parsons and Revington, A. Campbell, Esq., Belgrave Square, Monkstown; Messrs. Dodd, Flood, Begley, Colour-Sergt. Banks, Colour-Sergt. Valette. Ere he passed away the soldier alluded to in the heyday of the West Yorks' tug-o'-war prowess as "The man who didn't know his strength" sent his love to the victors of Lucknow, *i.e.*, the men with whom he vanquished the rope-pulling champions of Northern and Southern India, viz., Messrs. Pridmore, Wright, Macparlane, Jackson, Ferguson, Sherry, Webb, Burton, Hart, Collins, &c. Also to Patrick Hayes, driver of his favourite trotting-horse, Diamond (The Big Grey); Jamsey Hurley, his oldtime weight-raising rival; David Brien, Tullig; Mike Hayes (Marmion), his favourite stableman; John Hayes, Stoneville; Geoff Wycherly, Jerr Collins, Downeen; and the Hurleys of Cononagh. Of course his heart went out to the people living in the grey old houses leaning fondly for support upon each other at the base of the "Bloody Hill." The appended death-bed despatches to the printer of his booklet, ordering alterations in the proofs of its manuscript, were penned on a slip of paper by the author a short time previous to his demise. Military friends will at once realise in the bedside-written "orders" the penmanship of the man who for a record period of time held

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a premier place on the "14th's" tug-o'-war rope. Their reproduction on this tail-end page will reveal more strikingly than any item the body of the book contains the author's deep love for the 2nd West Yorkshires. In them can be seen the work of a trembling hand—a hand beaten to the ropes, yet, obeying the indomitable spirit of a soldier, repainting within shadow of the grave the battle-pictures of his old regiment. Then, when hand-linked veterans recalling the memory of other men and other days sing—

"Where are the boys of the old brigade?
Where are the lads we knew?"

let a prayer go up for the spirit that's gone, the soldier who never "fell out" from the line of march or line of battle—the soldier whose last earthly despatch was of the West Yorks' "Fighting Front."

R. I. P.

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